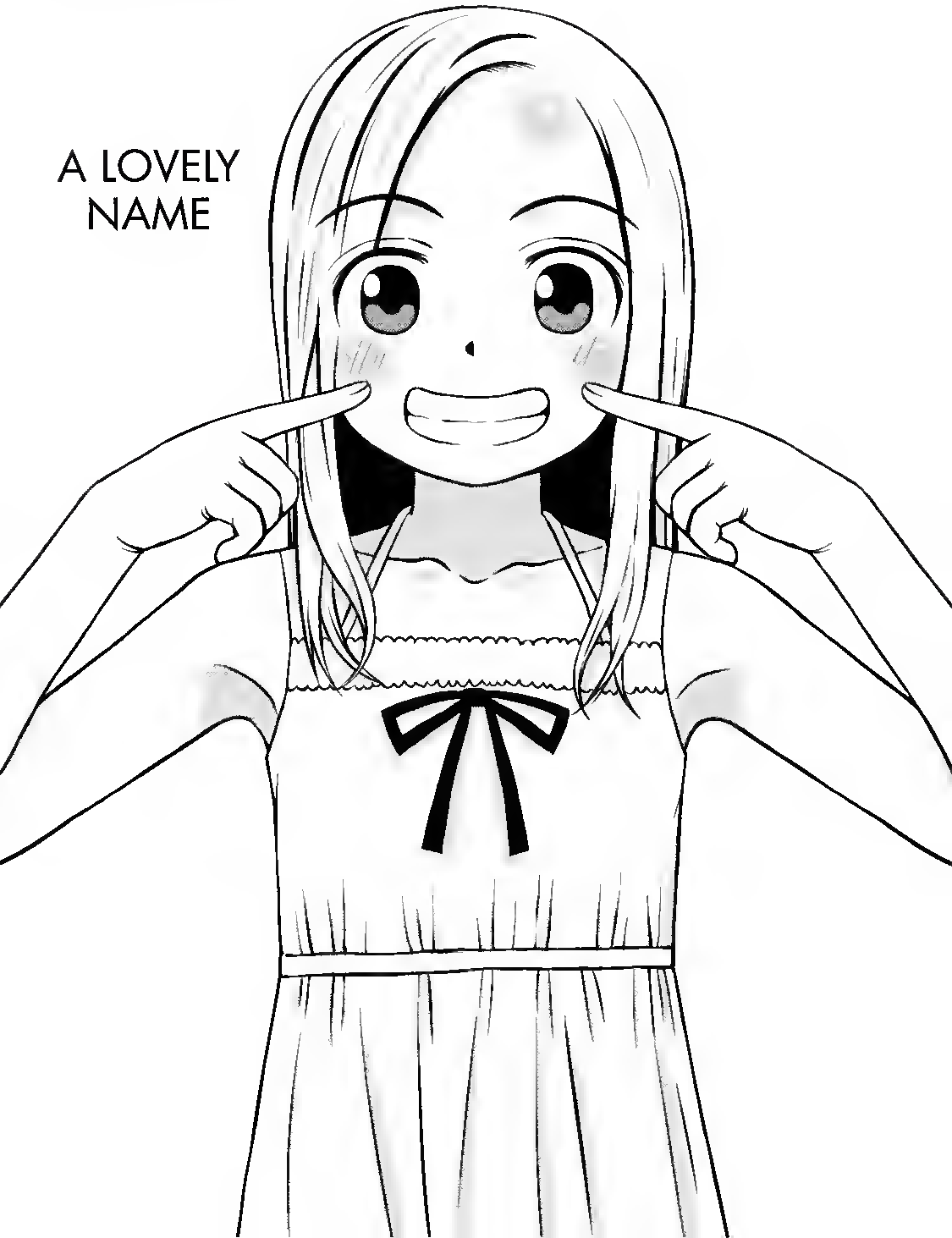
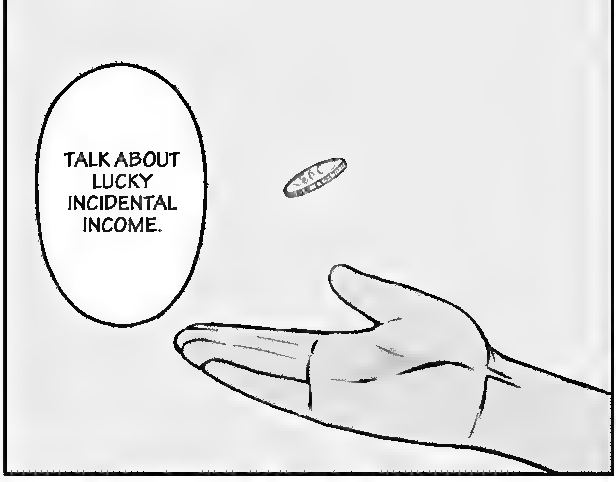
CHAPTER 09

A LOVELY NAME

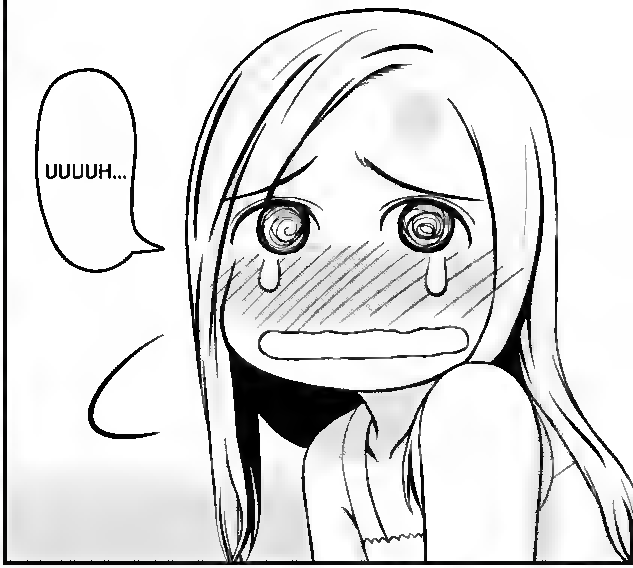


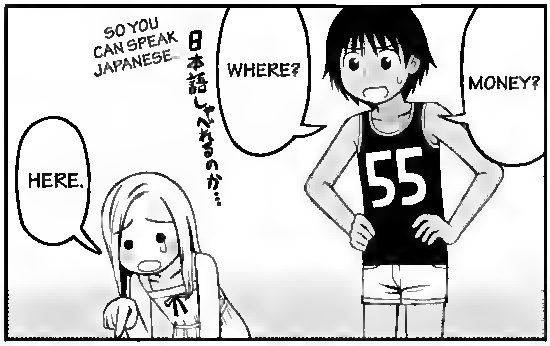

TALK ABOUT LUCKY INCIDENTAL INCOME.

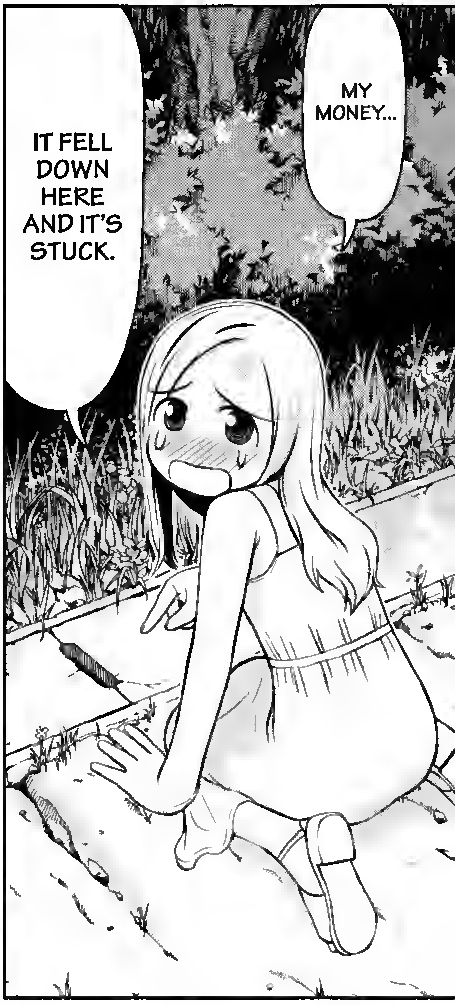
DAD
SHOULD FORGET HIS LUNCH EVERY DAY.
IF HE'S GOING TO GIVE ME AN ALLOWANCE JUST FOR DELIVERING HIS LUNCH...
5

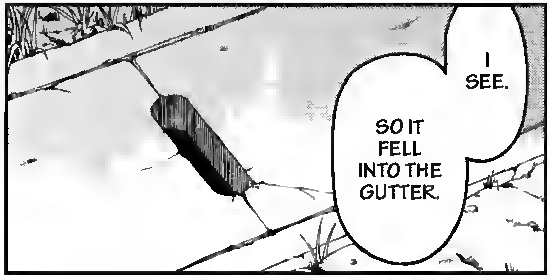
55
I'LL PROBABLY HAVE TO GO WITH GETTING ICE CREAM FROM NYŪNYŪTEI
WHAT SHOULD I USE MY PRECIOUS 500 YEN ON...
500
HEY
IS SOMETHING WRONG?
55
WHAT'S THAT GIRL DOING?

A FOREIGNER?
DO YOU NOT FEEL WELL?
55


UUUUH...


SO YOU CAN SPEAK JAPANESE.
日本語しゃべれるんか…
WHERE?
MONEY?
HERE.
55

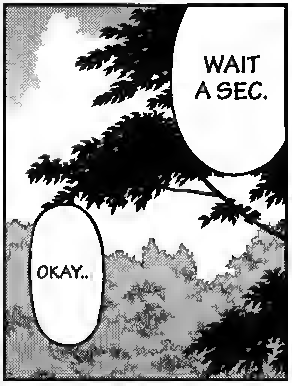

MY MONEY...
IT FELL DOWN HERE AND IT'S STUCK.

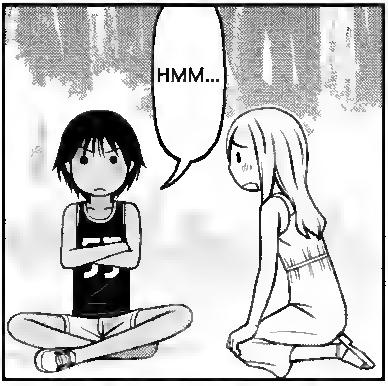

I SEE.
SO IT FELL INTO THE GUTTER.

GOT IT.

THE COVER WON'T COME OFF?
NO...
IT WON'T BUDGE AT ALL.

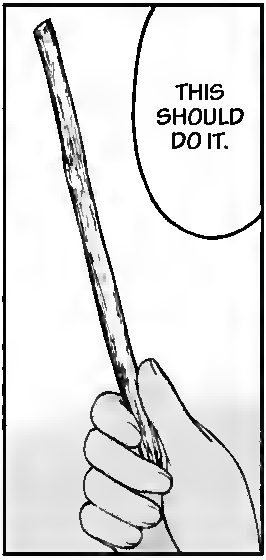
RUSTLE
RUSTLE

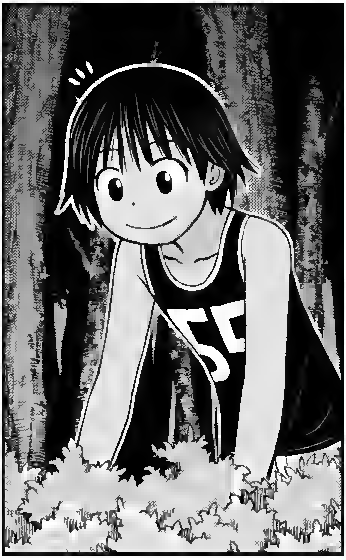

WAIT A SEC.
OKAY..

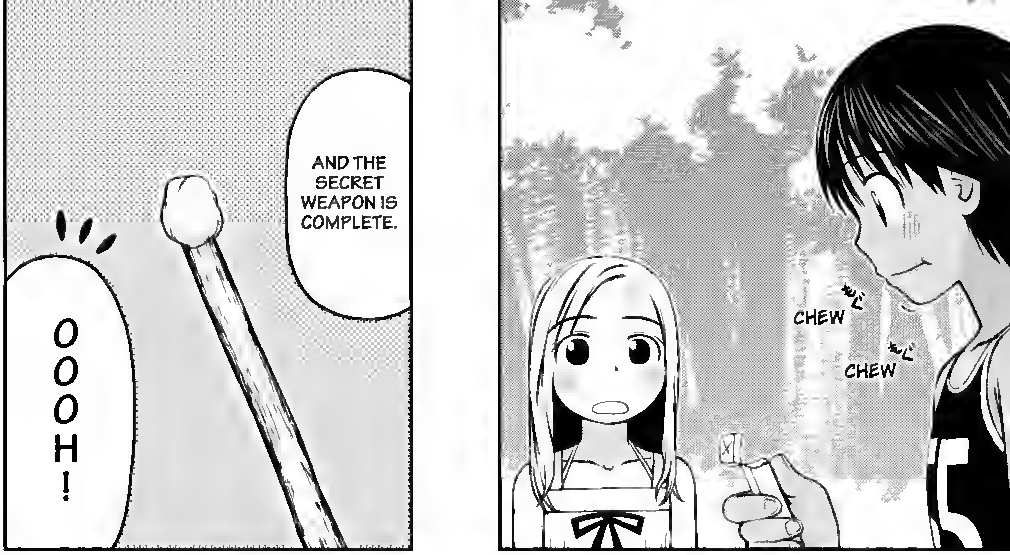

HMM...

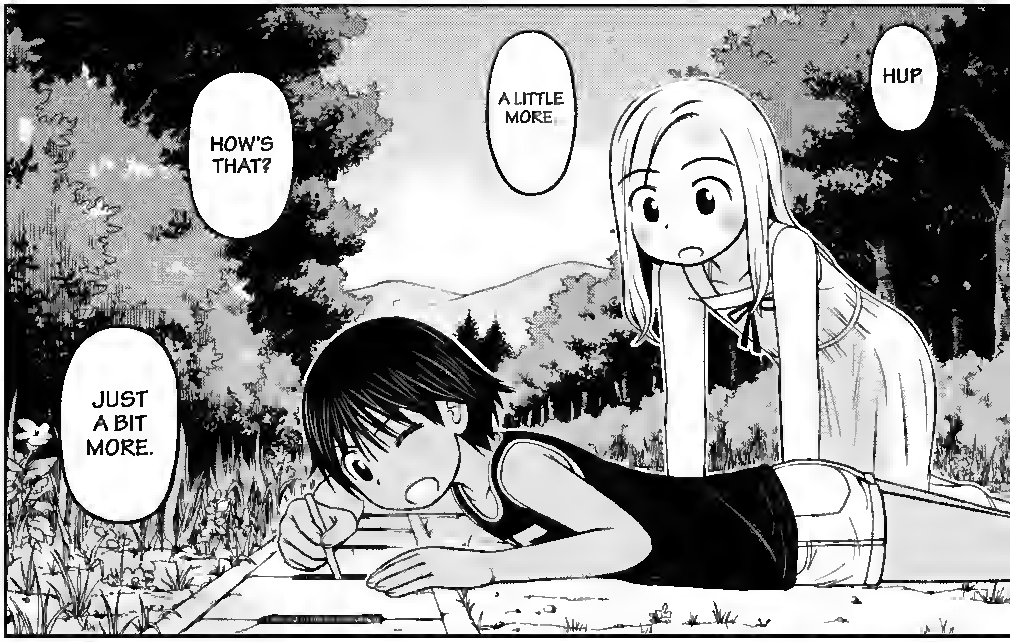
AND...

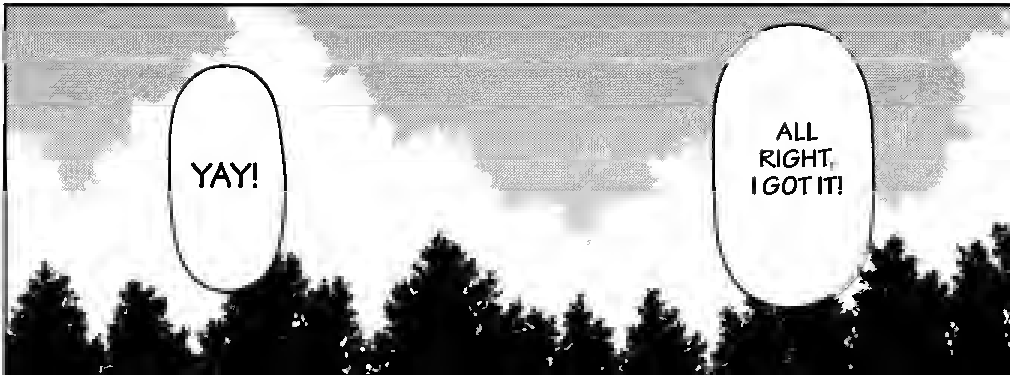
HERE IT IS.
SODA GUM


THIS SHOULD DO IT.



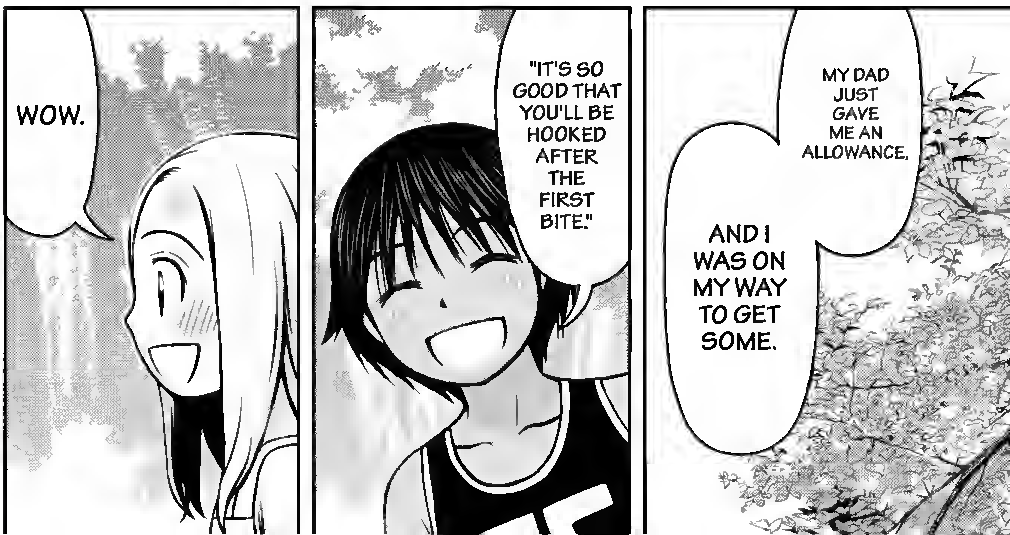

AND THE SECRET WEAPON IS COMPLETE.
OOOH!
CHEW
CHEW


HUP
A LITTLE MORE.
HOW'S THAT?
JUST A BIT MORE.


ALL RIGHT, I GOT IT!
YAY!

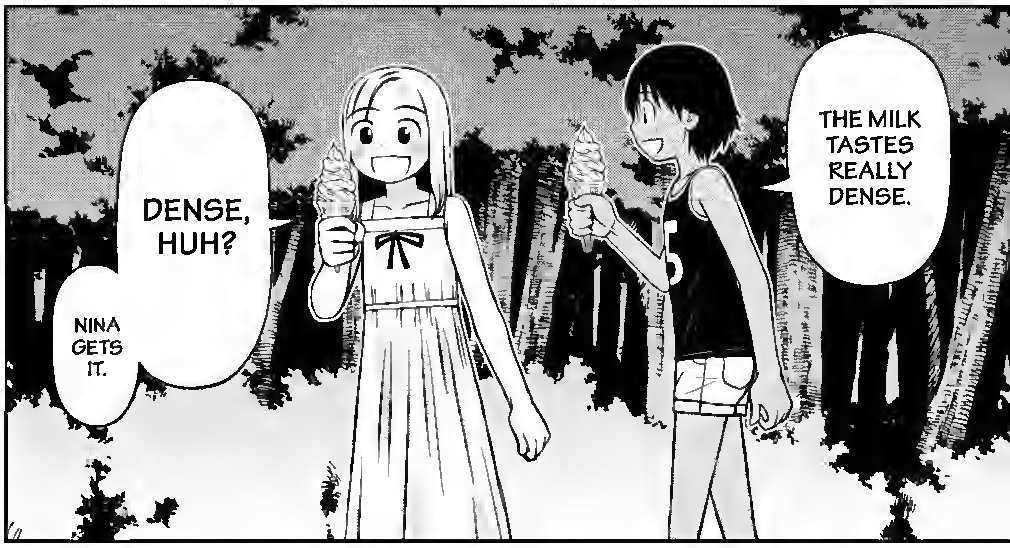
HERE.
IT'S DIRTY NOW THOUGH, IT'S GOT MY SPIT ON IT
THANK YOU.
NAH, YOU DON'T HAVE TO THANK ME.
WHAT?
NINA WANTS TO GIFT YOU!
GIFT!
COME ON!
THIS GIRL IS PERSISTENT
NINA WANTS TO GIFT YOU.
HUH? GIFT?
OH, YOU MEAN THANK ME?
...
I KNOW!

ICE CREAM?
JUST HANG OUT WITH ME FOR A FEW.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THANKING ME.
I'M TALKING ABOUT HOMEMADE SOFT SERVE MADE FROM FRESH COW MILK.
NOT STORE-BOUGHT ONES LIKE THAT.
YOU MEAN LIKE GARI-GARI POPSICLES?
HOMEMAID?

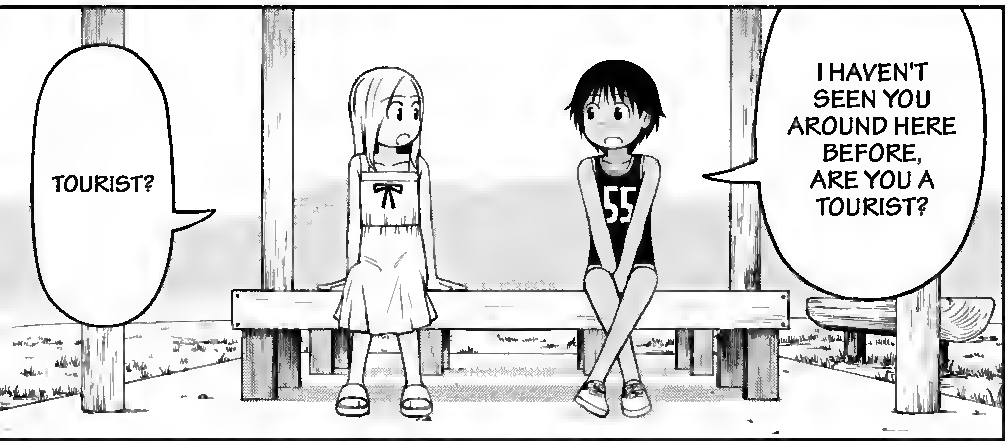

WOW.
"IT'S SO GOOD THAT YOU'LL BE HOOKED AFTER THE FIRST BITE."
MY DAD JUST GAVE ME AN ALLOWANCE.
AND I WAS ON MY WAY TO GET SOME.

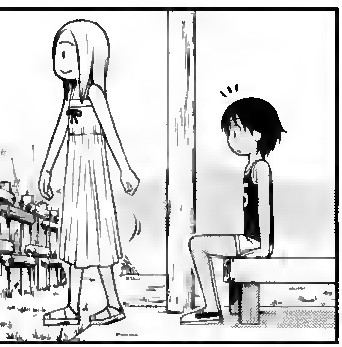
HERE.
YEP.
GO AHEAD AND TRY IT.
THIS IS HOMEMADE ICE CREAM?
RIGHT?
DELICIOUS!
...
LICK

DOESN'T IT TASTE FLAVORFUL AND RICH?
DEFINITELY. IT'S RICH AND FATTY.
IT'S NOT RAMEN, SO YOU WOULDN'T DESCRIBE IT LIKE THAT.

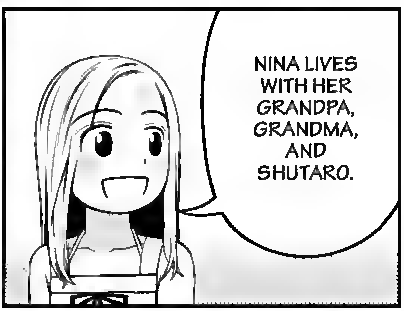

THE MILK TASTES REALLY DENSE.
DENSE, HUH?
NINA GETS IT.

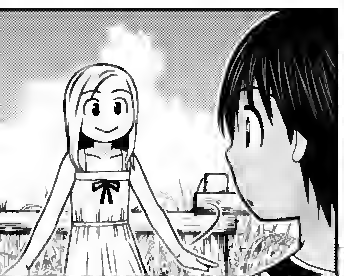
THIS IS REALLY GOOD.
NINA WANTS SHUTARO TO TRY SOME, TOO.
CAN NINA BRING SHUTARO NEXT TIME?
HUH?
IT'S NOT LIKE IT'S MY PLACE, SO SURE.
I WONDER IF SHUTARO IS THE NAME OF HER YOUNGER BROTHER...
日本人ぽい名前だけど…
SOUNDS PRETTY JAPANESE, THOUGH.


I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU AROUND HERE BEFORE, ARE YOU A TOURIST?
TOURIST?

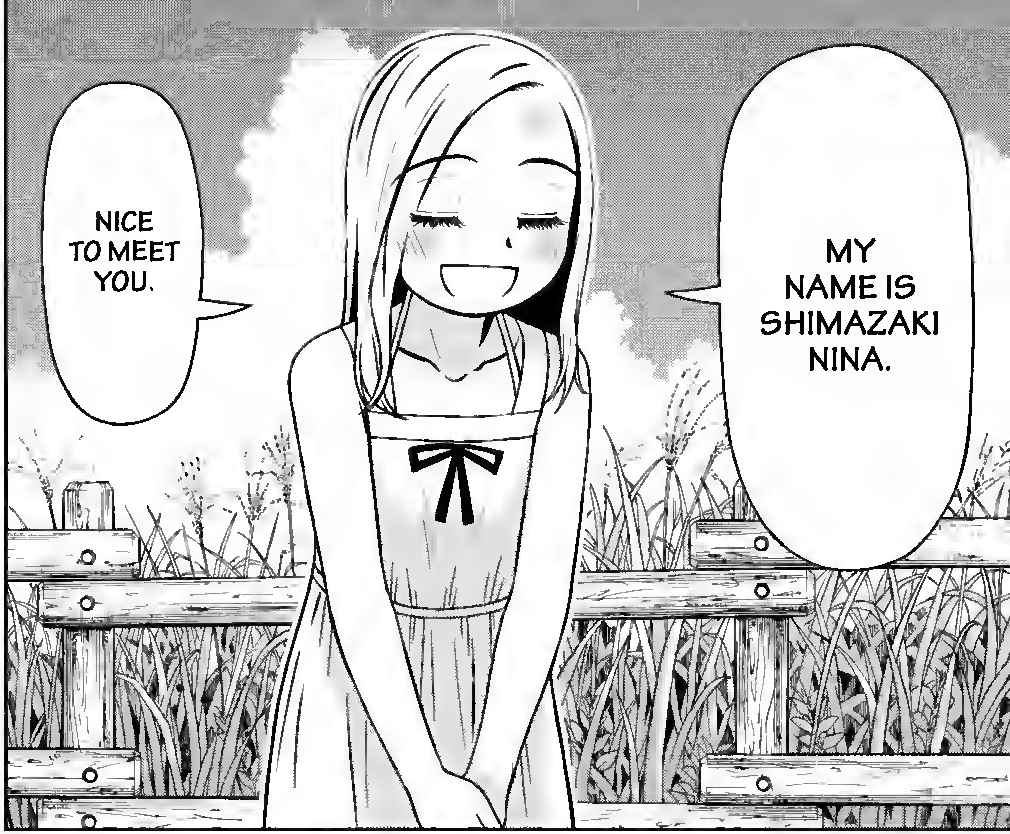


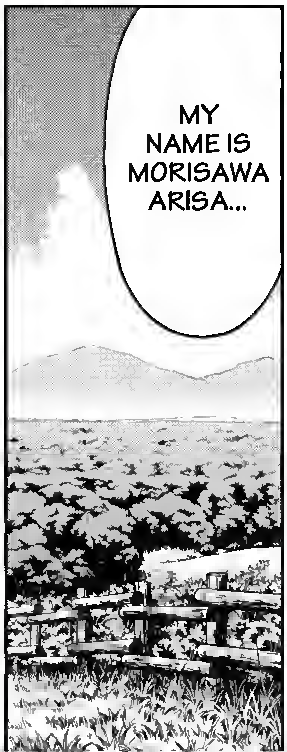
NINA STARTED LIVING IN JAPAN A MONTH AGO.
ひと月まえから ニッポンで 住みはじめたんだ
HUH.

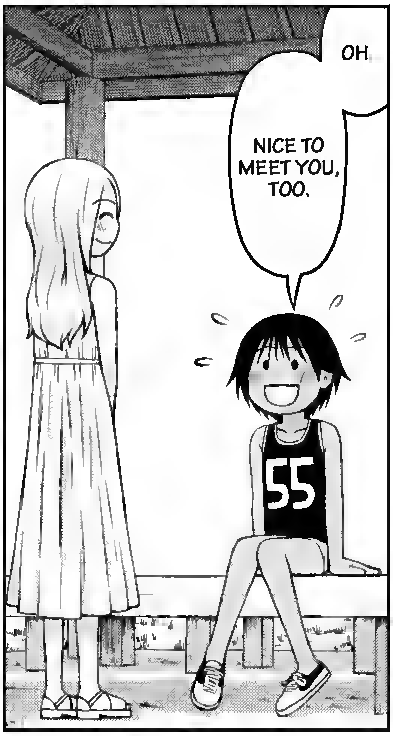

NINA LIVES WITH HER GRANDPA, GRANDMA, AND SHUTARO.



HUH.
SO NINA'S HER NAME.

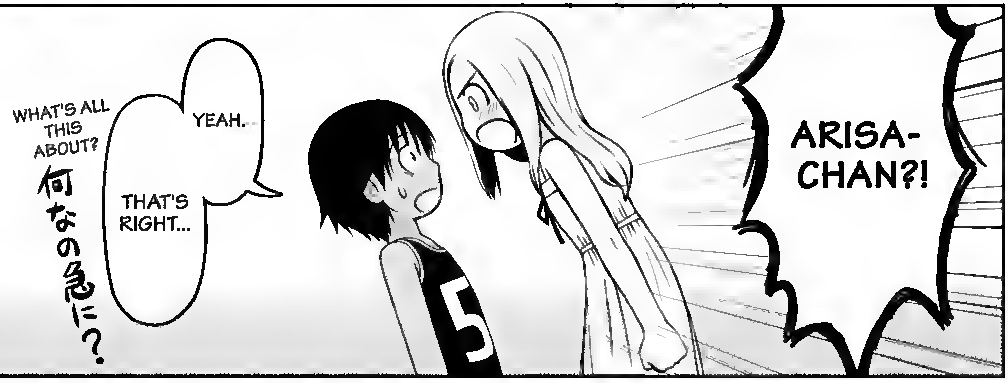

MY NAME IS SHIMAZAKI NINA.
NICE TO MEET YOU.

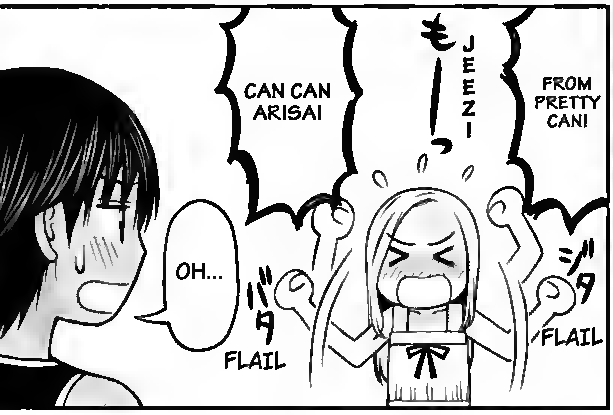

MY NAME IS MORISAWA ARISA...


NICE TO MEET YOU, TOO.
OH.
55

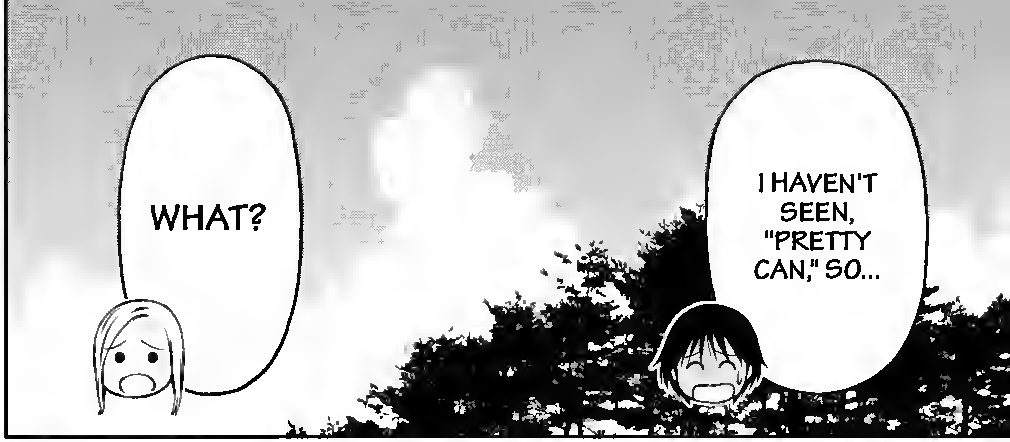
55

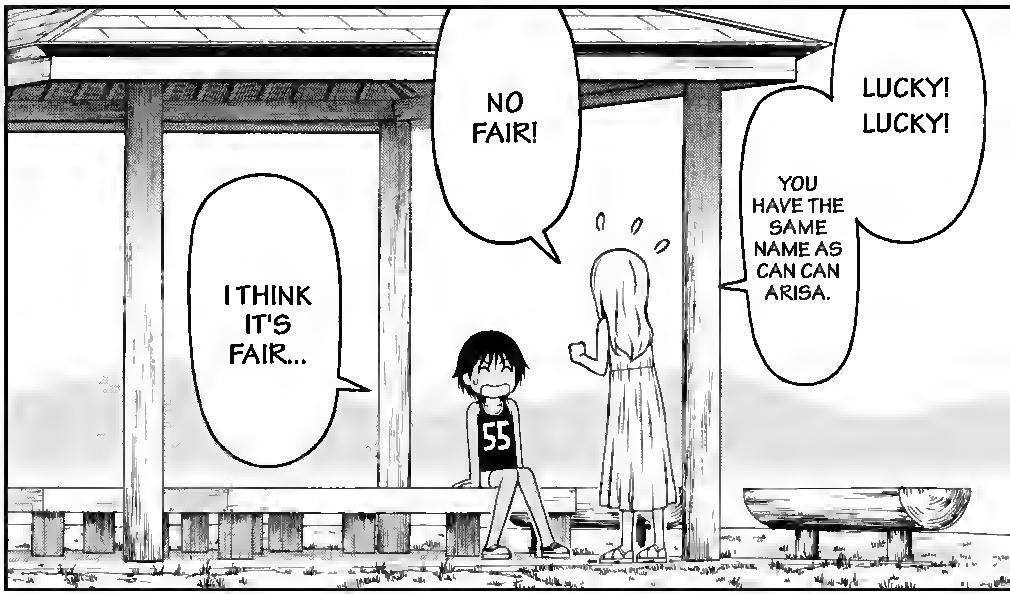
ZOOM
ARISA?!
TWITCH


ARISA-CHAN?!
YEAH.
THAT'S RIGHT...
WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT?
何なの急に？

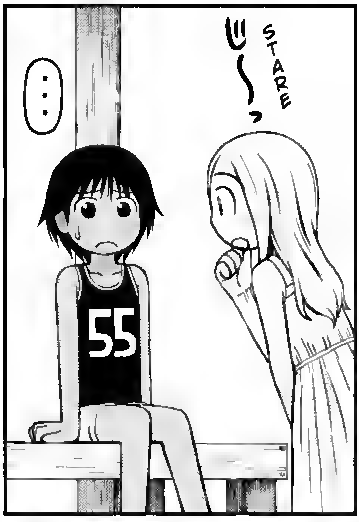

CAN CAN ARISA!
JEEZ!
FROM PRETTY CAN!
OH...
FLAIL
FLAIL

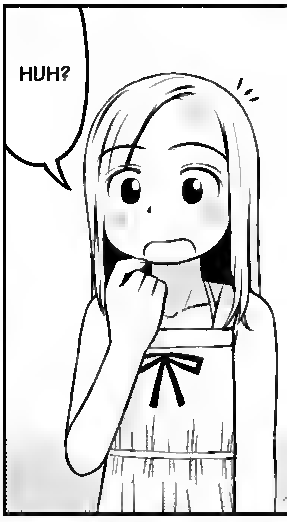
CAN CAN ARISA?!
HUH?
WHAT'S THAT?


WHAT?
I HAVEN'T SEEN, "PRETTY CAN," SO...


NO FAIR!
LUCKY! LUCKY!
YOU HAVE THE SAME NAME AS CAN CAN ARISA.
I THINK IT'S FAIR...
55

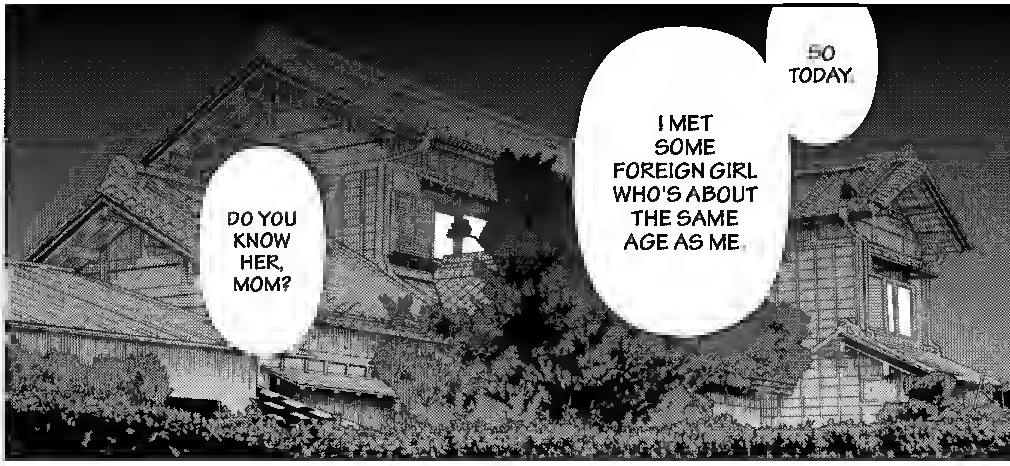
WHAT?

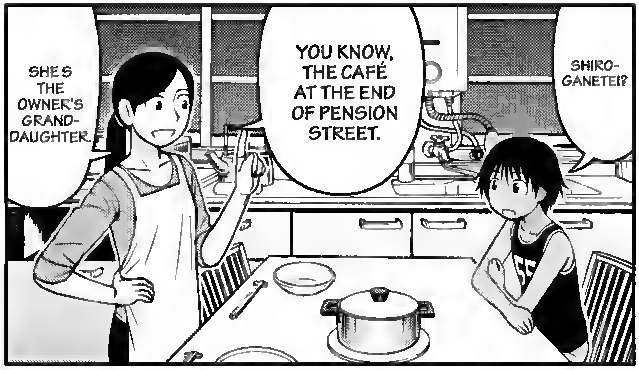

STARE
55


HUH?

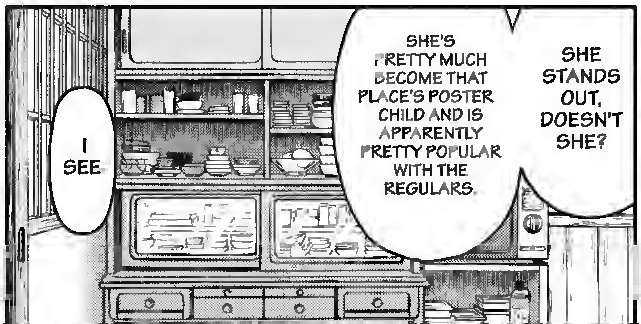
D'OH
ガーン
ARISA-CHAN, YOU'RE A GIRL?
H-HEY!
HOW RUDE!
YOU THOUGHT I WAS A BOY THIS WHOLE TIME?!
YEP.
DON'T BE SO BLUNT ABOUT IT!
BUT..
THE FACT THAT YOU'RE LIKE A BOY MAKES YOU LIKE CAN CAN ARISA, TOO.
SO IT'S FINE.
...

CONGRA-TULATE
DON'T CONGRA-TULATE ME!
THAT DOESN'T MAKE ME HAPPY AT ALL!

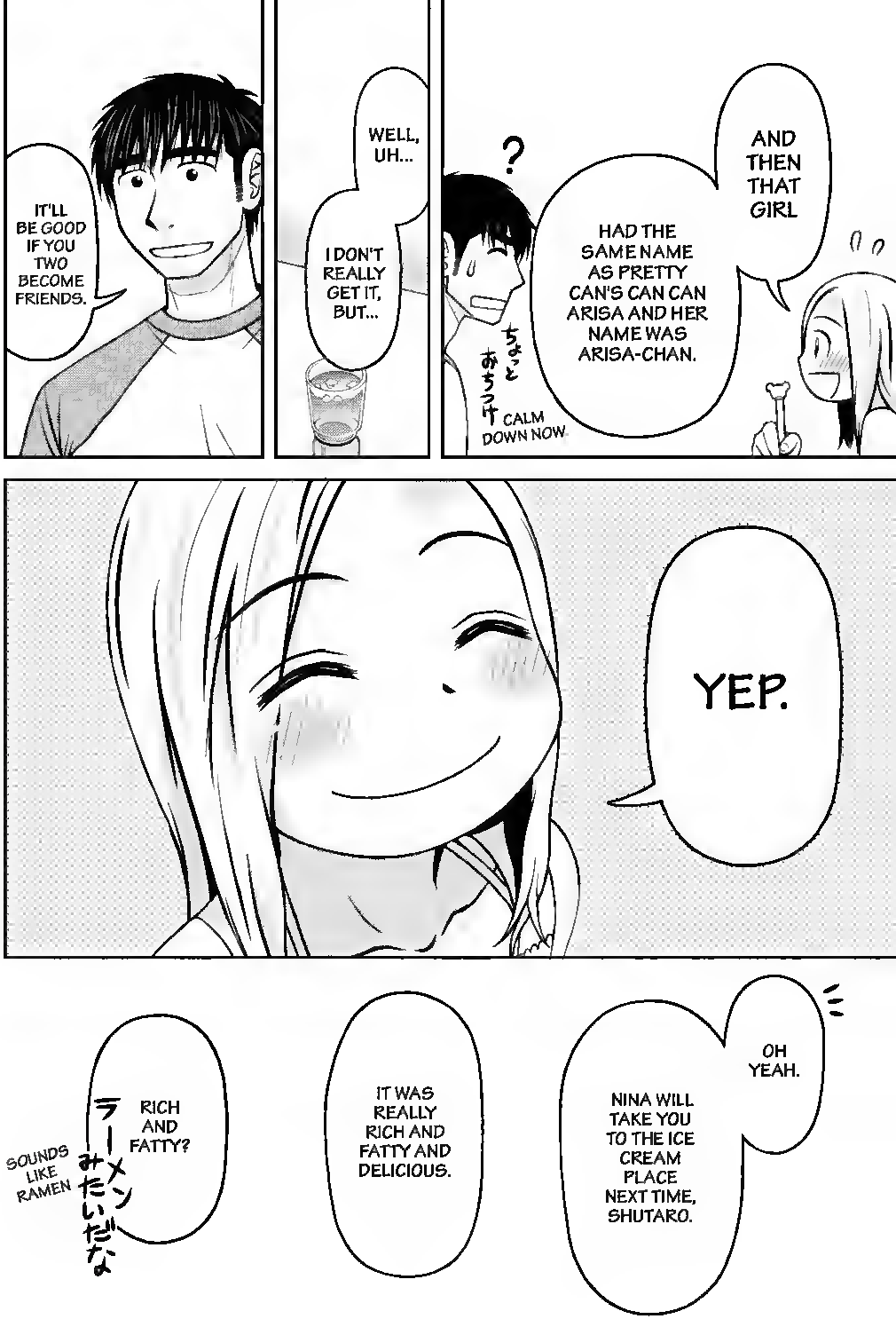

SO TODAY,
I MET SOME FOREIGN GIRL WHO'S ABOUT THE SAME AGE AS ME.
DO YOU KNOW HER, MOM?

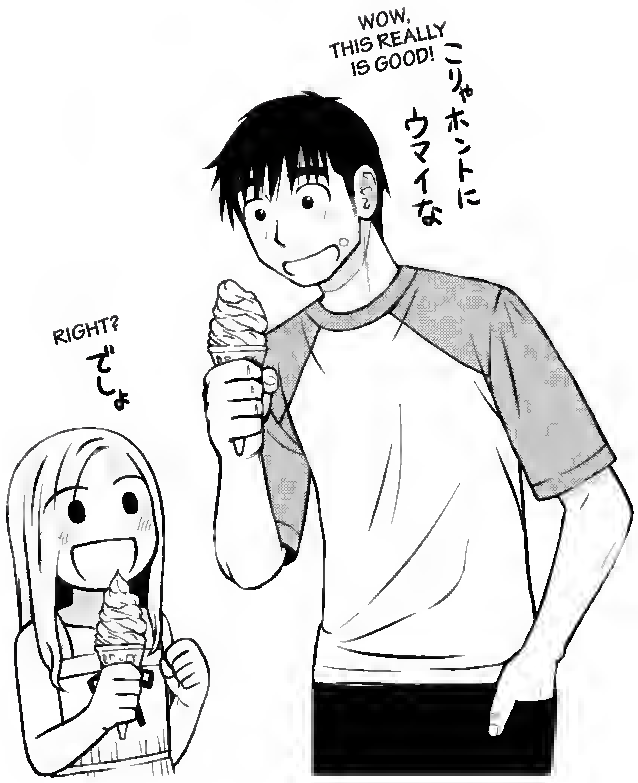

SHIRO-GANETEI?
YOU KNOW, THE CAFÉ AT THE END OF PENSION STREET.
SHE'S THE OWNER'S GRAND-DAUGHTER.

THAT WOULD BE NINA-CHAN FROM SHIRO-GANETEI


SHE STANDS OUT, DOESN'T SHE?
SHE'S PRETTY MUCH BECOME THAT PLACE'S POSTER CHILD AND IS APPARENTLY PRETTY POPULAR WITH THE REGULARS.
I SEE.

...
WHAT?
WHY DON'T YOU BECOME FRIENDS WITH HER?
HUH.
SO THAT GIRL...
GOT THE MONEY OUT FOR YOU?
YEP.
AND THEN WE HAD SOME REALLY YUMMY ICE CREAM AFTERWARDS.

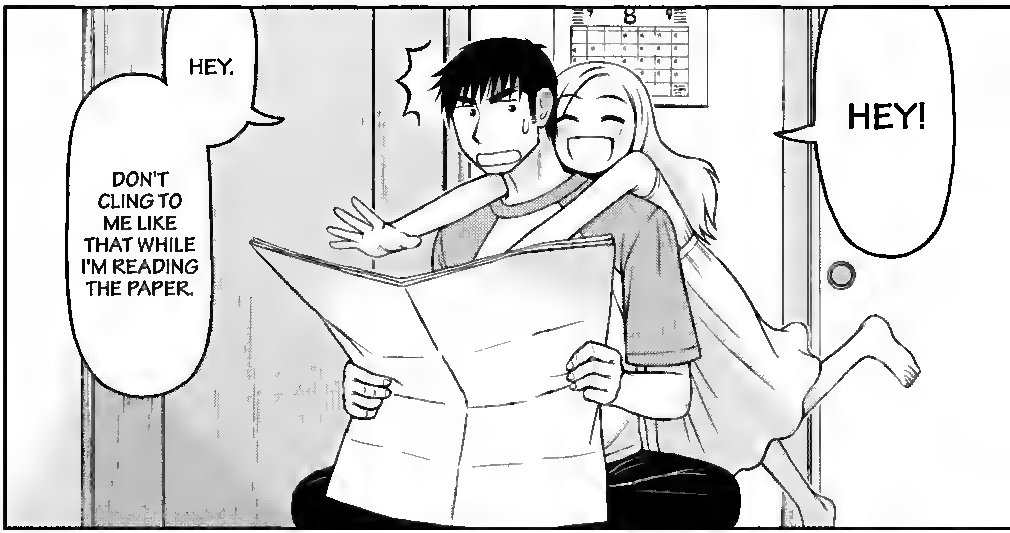

IT'LL BE GOOD IF YOU TWO BECOME FRIENDS.
WELL, UH...
I DON'T REALLY GET IT, BUT...
?
AND THEN THAT GIRL
HAD THE SAME NAME AS PRETTY CAN'S CAN CAN ARISA AND HER NAME WAS ARISA-CHAN.
ちょっとおちつけ
CALM DOWN NOW.
YEP.
OH YEAH.
NINA WILL TAKE YOU TO THE ICE CREAM PLACE NEXT TIME, SHUTARO.
IT WAS REALLY RICH AND FATTY AND DELICIOUS.
RICH AND FATTY?
SOUNDS LIKE RAMEN
ラーメンみたいだな

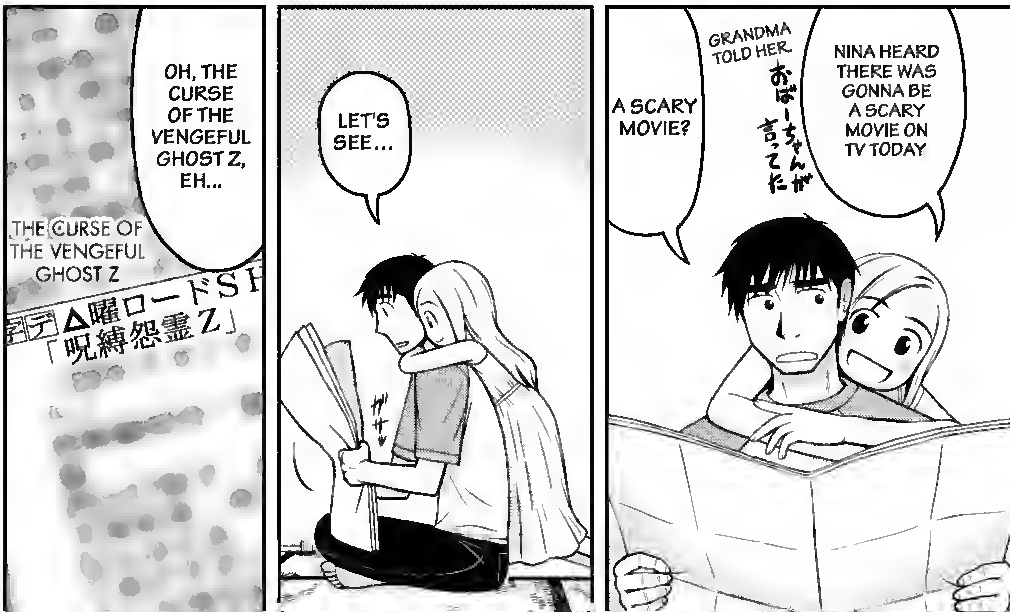

WOW,
THIS REALLY
IS GOOD!
こりゃホントにウマイな
RIGHT?
でしょ

CHAPTER 10

IF WE'RE TOGETHER...

SHUTARO!

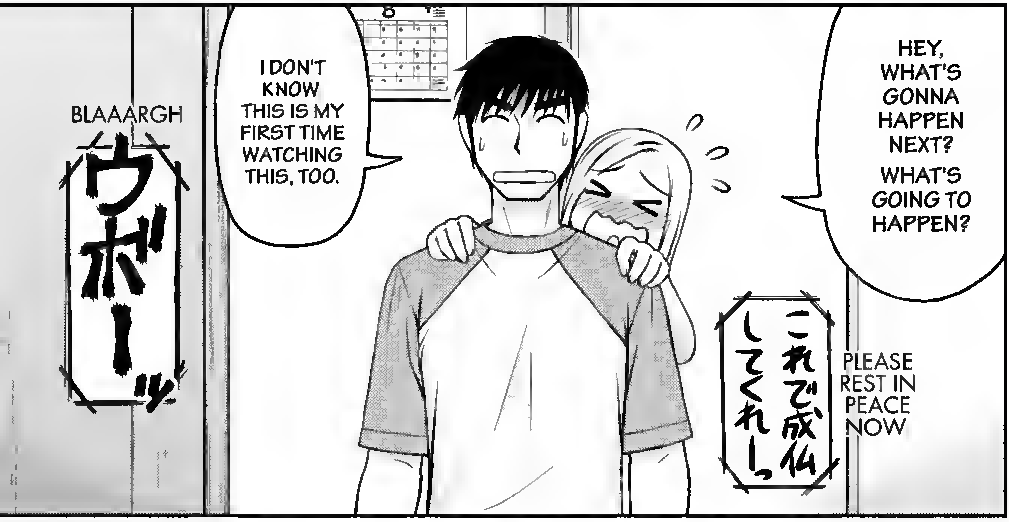

HEY.
DON'T CLING TO ME LIKE THAT WHILE I'M READING THE PAPER.
HEY!

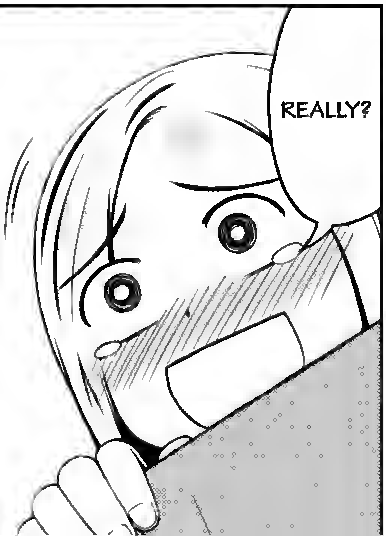

OH, THE CURSE OF THE VENGEFUL GHOST Z, EH...
THE CURSE OF THE VENGEFUL GHOST Z
テレビ「△曜ロードSH
「呪縛怨霊Z」
LET'S SEE...
ガサ
A SCARY MOVIE?
GRANDMA TOLD HER おばーちゃんが言ってた
NINA HEARD THERE WAS GONNA BE A SCARY MOVIE ON TV TODAY

THAT MOVIE'S SUPPOSED TO BE REALLY SCARY.
YOU'RE HEAVY
重いっつーの
REALLY?
NINA WANTS TO WATCH A JAPANESE HORROR MOVIE!!
SHUTARO, LET'S WATCH IT TOGETHER TONIGHT.
I DON'T MIND WATCHING IT, BUT...
IF YOU WATCH A SCARY MOVIE LIKE THIS,
YOU SURE YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BE TOO SCARED TO GO TO THE BATHROOM ALONE AT NIGHT?
NOPE!
NINA'S NOT THAT MUCH OF A KID
ALL RIGHT, LET'S WATCH IT TOGETHER.
YAY!

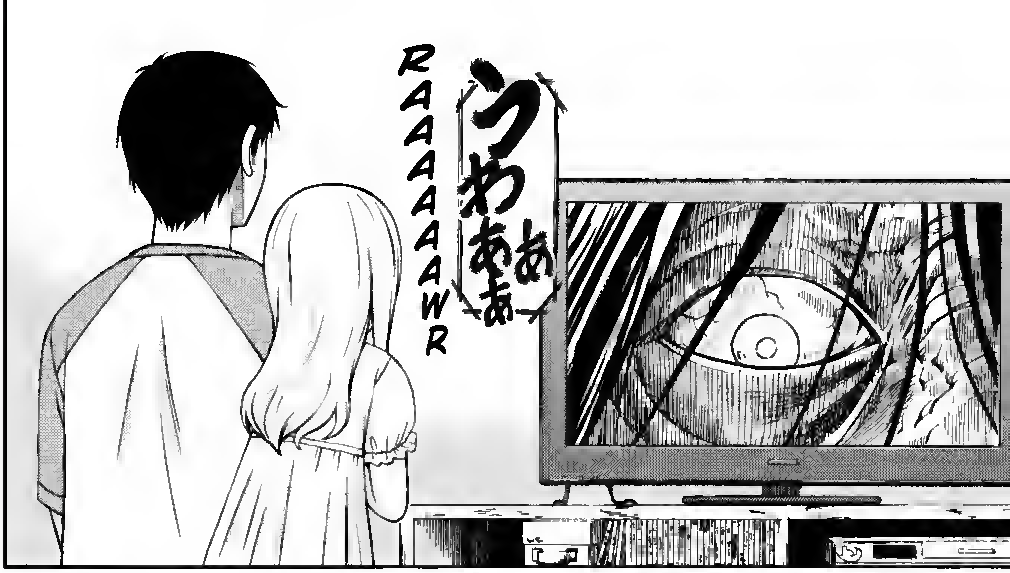
ぶあああ
ROAAAR
キャーッ
EEEK!
JUMP
ビクッ
うわー
UNNGH
YOU KNOW
YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO WATCH IT IF YOU'RE IN HIDING
SCARY! SCARY!
ウガー
UWAAHH

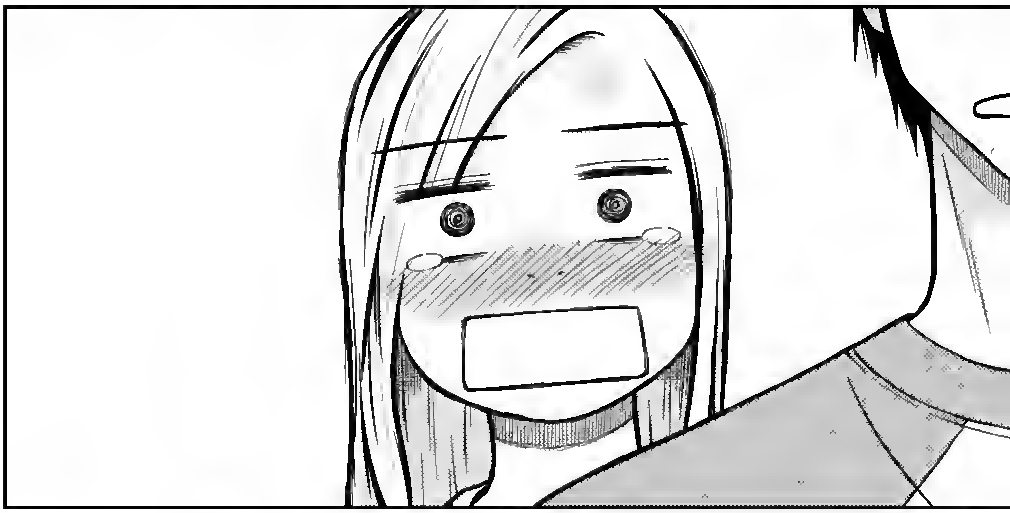
IMPOSSIBLE!
そんなバカなーっ
NINA DIDN'T THINK IT'D BE THIS SCARY.
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WANTED TO WATCH THIS IN THE FIRST PLACE...
EEEEE
ひいいい


BLAAARGH
ウボーッ
I DON'T KNOW THIS IS MY FIRST TIME WATCHING THIS, TOO.
HEY, WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN NEXT?
WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN?
これで成仏してくれーっ
PLEASE REST IN PEACE NOW

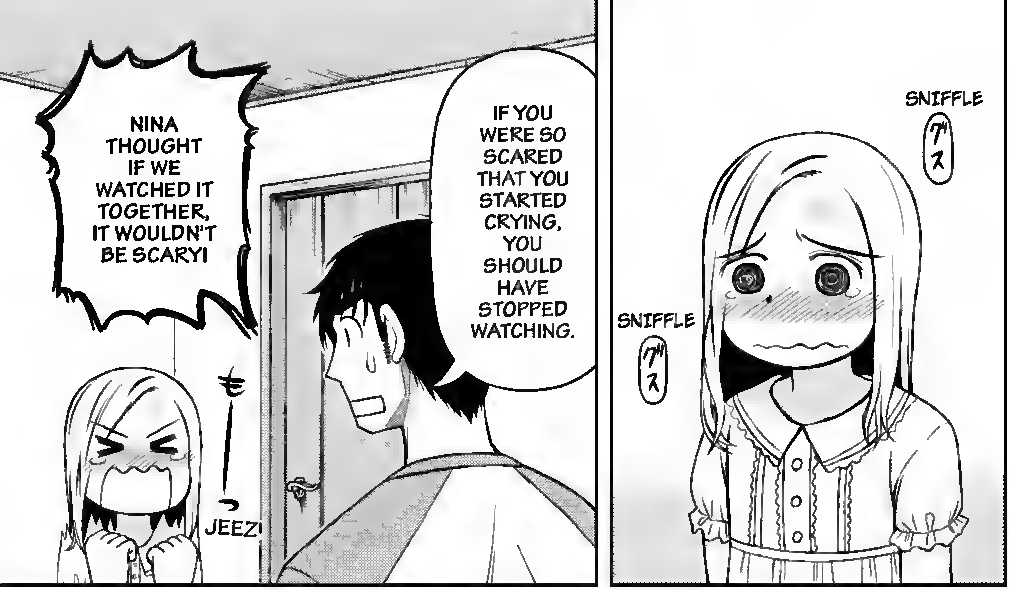

REALLY?

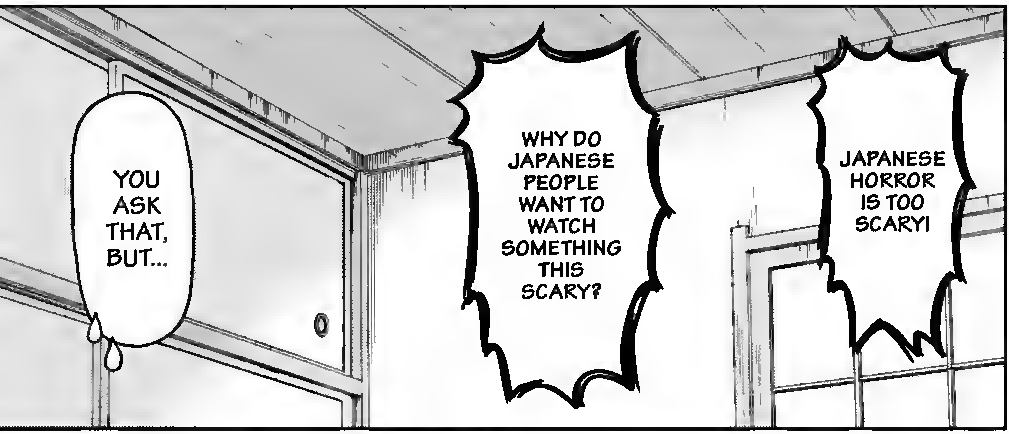
YEAH, IT'S ALMOST OVER.
LOOKS LIKE IT'S GOING TO BE A HAPPY ENDING
助かったのか俺達…
DID WE MAKE IT?
ええ…
YES


うわあああ
RAAAAAWR

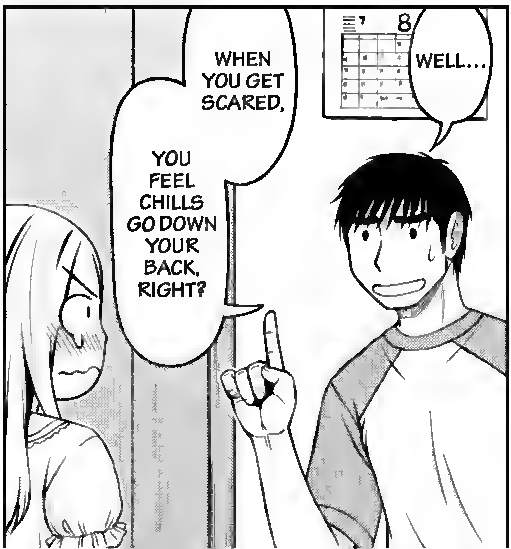


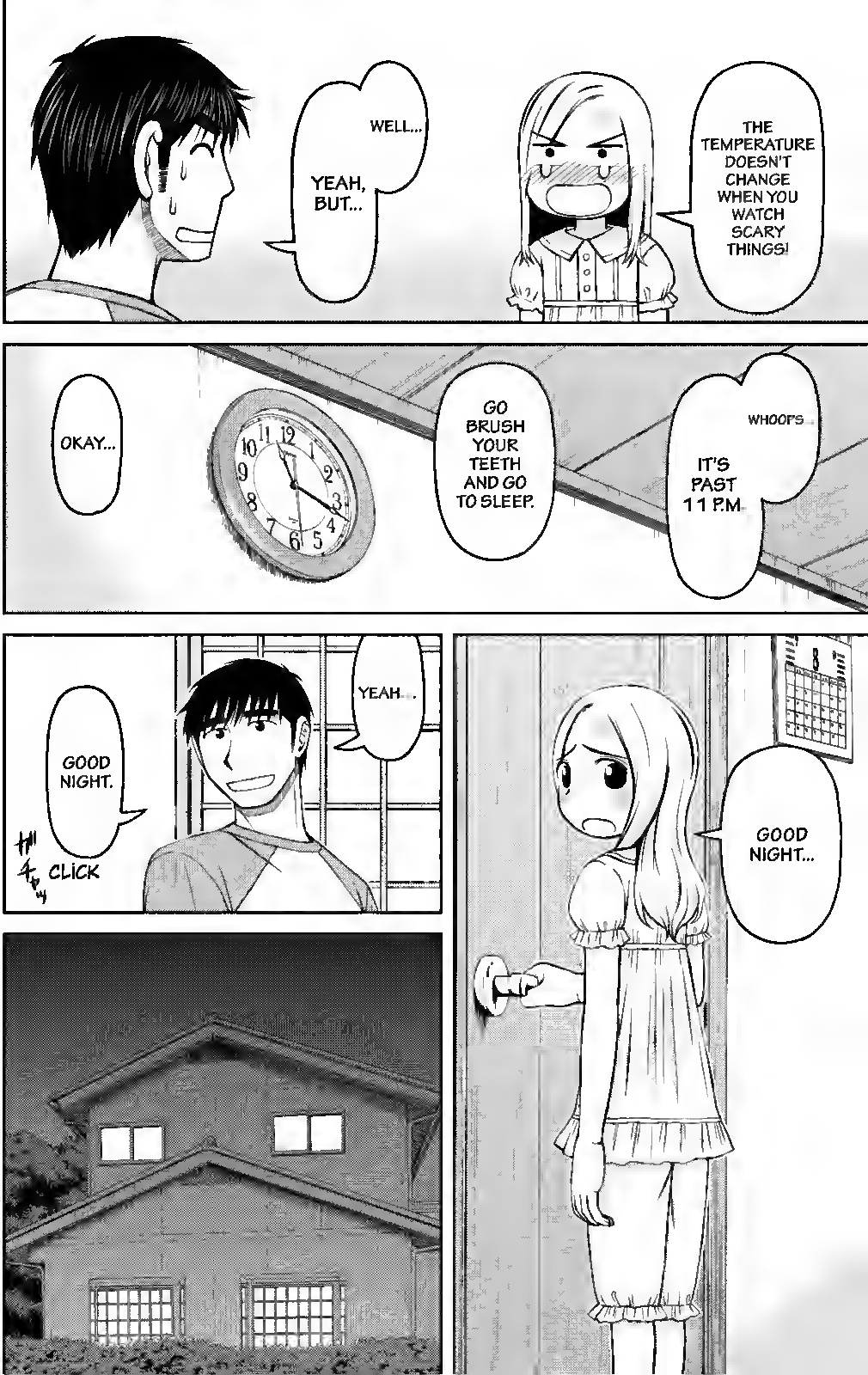
ギャ
AAAAAAAAAAAAH!
ッ


NINA THOUGHT IF WE WATCHED IT TOGETHER, IT WOULDN'T BE SCARY!
IF YOU WERE SO SCARED THAT YOU STARTED CRYING, YOU SHOULD HAVE STOPPED WATCHING.
JEEZ!
SNIFFLE
SNIFFLE


YOU ASK THAT, BUT...
WHY DO JAPANESE PEOPLE WANT TO WATCH SOMETHING THIS SCARY?
JAPANESE HORROR IS TOO SCARY!

SO WE WATCH SCARY THINGS TO FEEL A LITTLE COOLER.
IT'S HOT IN THE SUMMER,
...


WELL...
WHEN YOU GET SCARED,
YOU FEEL CHILLS GO DOWN YOUR BACK, RIGHT?

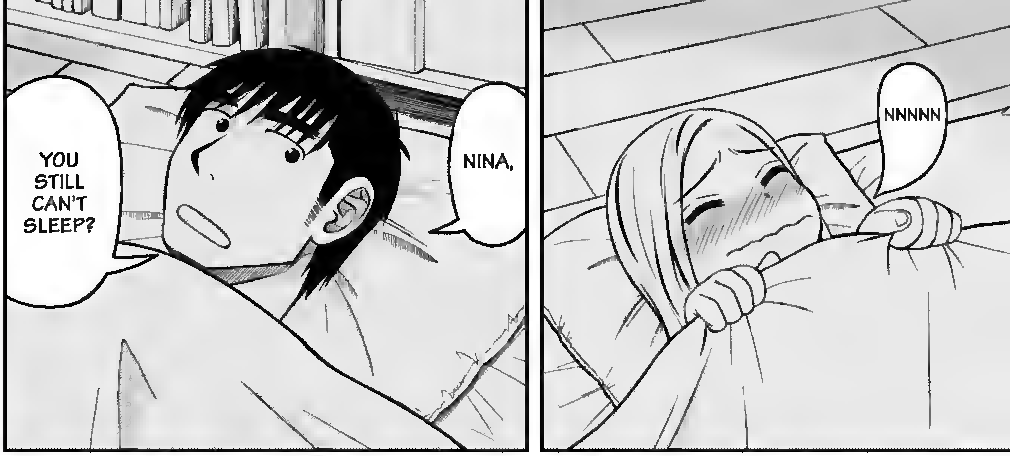

THE TEMPERATURE DOESN'T CHANGE WHEN YOU WATCH SCARY THINGS!
WELL...
YEAH, BUT...
WHOOPS...
IT'S PAST 11 P.M.
GO BRUSH YOUR TEETH AND GO TO SLEEP.
OKAY...
GOOD NIGHT...
YEAH...
GOOD NIGHT.
CLICK

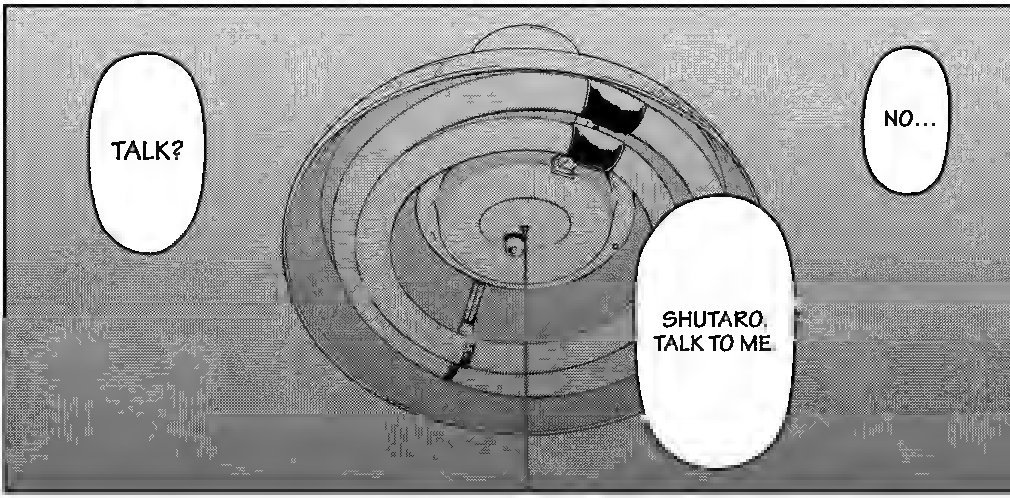
KNOCK
コン
KNOCK
コン
SHUTARO
KNOCK
コン
KNOCK
コン
KNOCK
コン
JUST A SEC
NINA?
SHUTARO
CLICK
ガチャッ

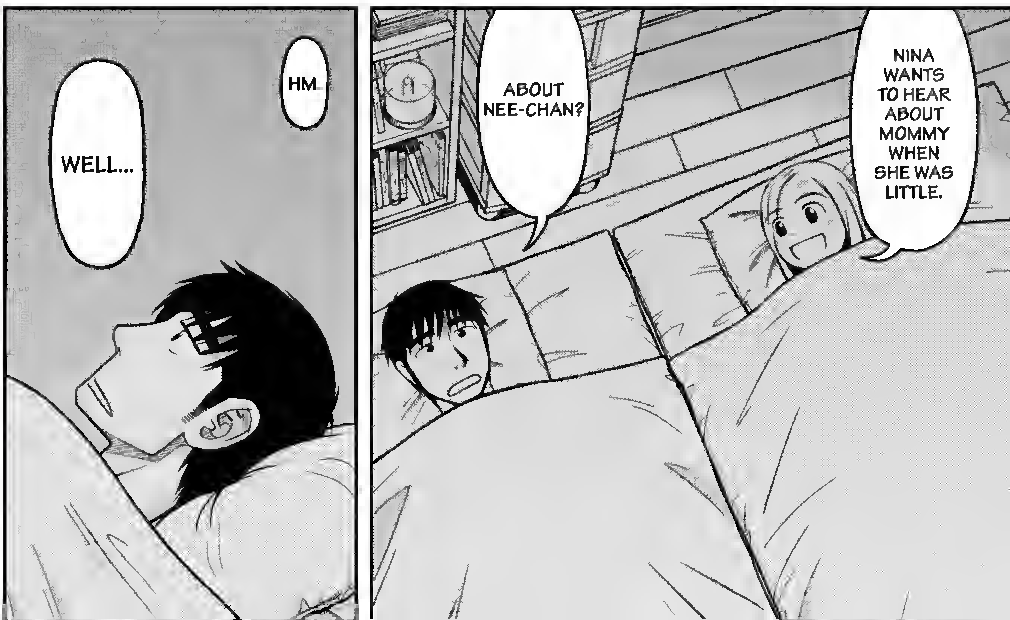
WELL...
I HAD A FEELING THIS WOULD HAPPEN.

YEAH.
DO YOU WANT TO SLEEP IN MY ROOM?
EVEN WITH HER EYES CLOSED, NINA KEEPS IMAGINING A LOT OF SCARY STUFF.
NOPE.
YOU CAN'T SLEEP, RIGHT?

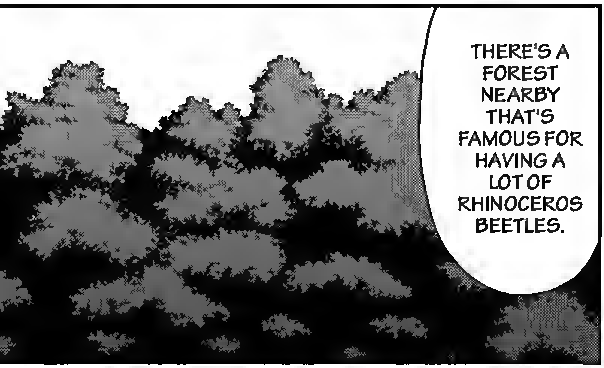
YOU'RE WELL-PREPARED...
NINA ALREADY PULLED IT ALL THE WAY HERE.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO.
ALL RIGHT. I'LL GO GET YOUR FUTON, WAIT HERE.


NINA,
YOU STILL CAN'T SLEEP?
NNNNN

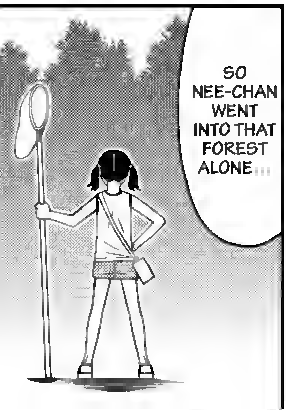

TALK?
NO...
SHUTARO, TALK TO ME.


HM.
WELL...
ABOUT NEE-CHAN?
NINA WANTS TO HEAR ABOUT MOMMY WHEN SHE WAS LITTLE.

IF I HAD TO SUM UP NEE-CHAN AS A KID IN SINGLE WORD,
IT'D BE "RECKLESS."
RECKLESS?
WHAT'S THAT?

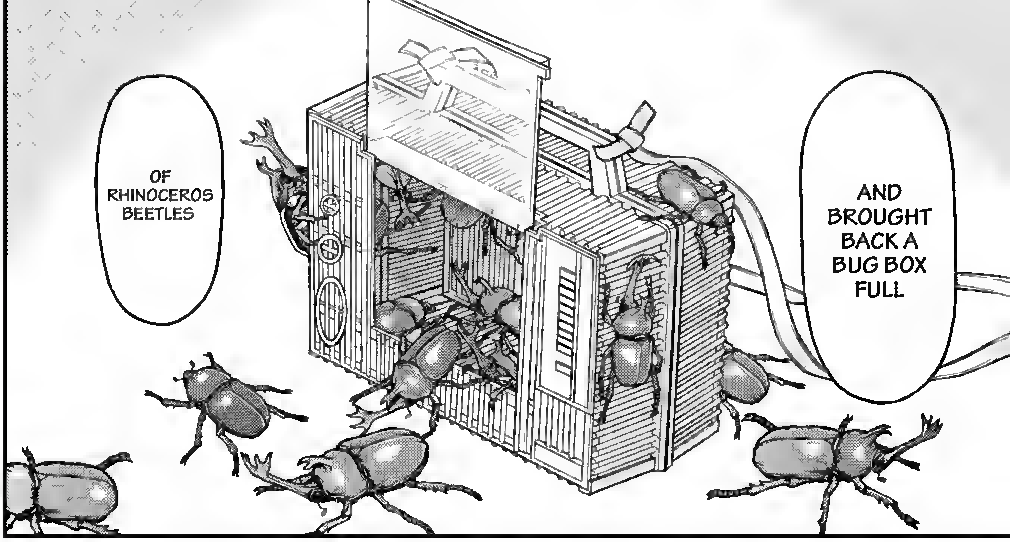

THERE'S A FOREST NEARBY THAT'S FAMOUS FOR HAVING A LOT OF RHINOCEROS BEETLES.

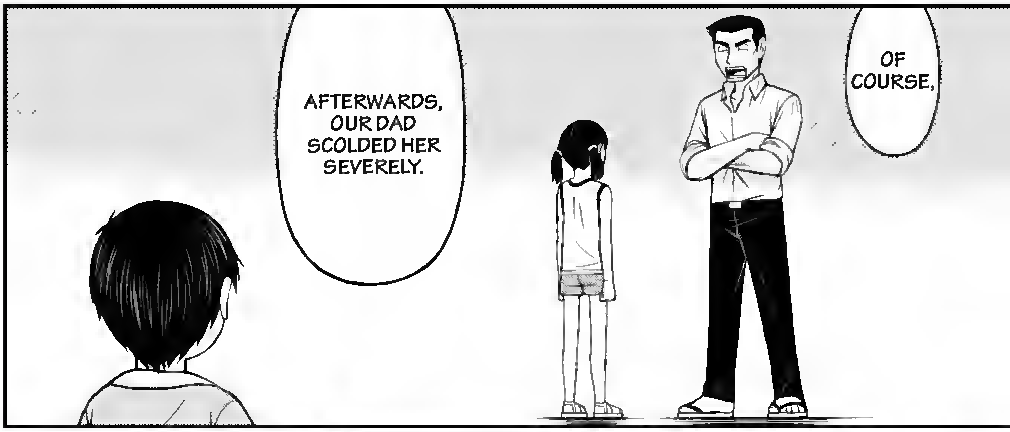
BUT THERE WERE BEARS IN THERE,
SO KIDS WEREN'T ALLOWED TO GO IN ALONE.


SO NEE-CHAN WENT INTO THAT FOREST ALONE...

ONE DAY, I TOLD HER I WANTED A RHINOCEROS BEETLE

EVEN IF THE ADULTS TOLD HER "NO,"
IF SHE WANTED TO DO SOMETHING, SHE'D DO IT ANYWAY, WITHOUT CONSIDERING THE CONSEQUENCES THAT'S THE KIND OF KID SHE WAS..


OF RHINOCEROS BEETLES
AND BROUGHT BACK A BUG BOX FULL


AFTERWARDS, OUR DAD SCOLDED HER SEVERELY.
OF COURSE,

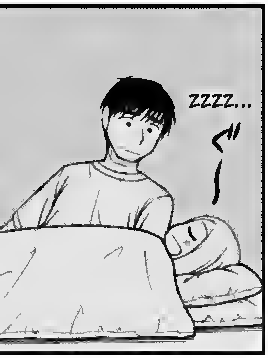
YOU COULD SAY SHE WAS SORT OF A HERO TO ME.

SHE THEN WENT TO STUDY OVERSEAS IN FINLAND BY HERSELF.
TO TOP THAT OFF,

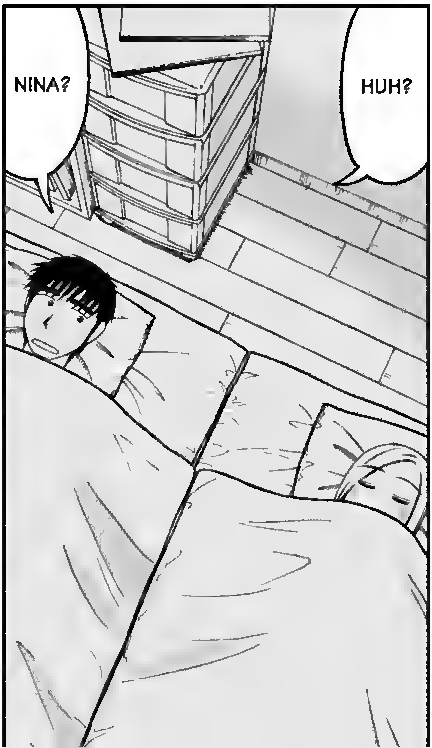
EVEN THOUGH I WAS A KID,
MY SISTER'S MOTIVATION AWED ME.

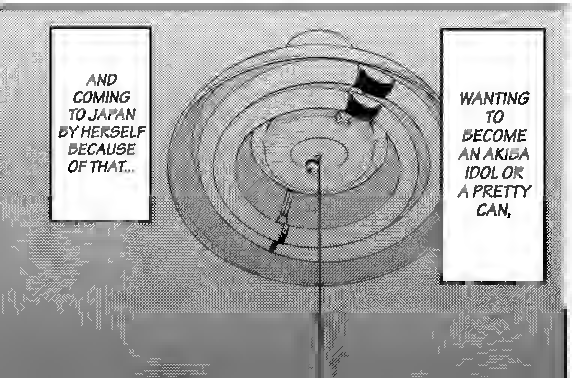
I WASN'T ABOUT TO LOSE TO MY SISTER,
SUCCESS
SO I STUDIED REALLY HARD...
AND I WENT TO TOKYO AND WAS ABLE TO GET A JOB I SORTA WANTED...

THEN THERE WAS TROUBLE AT WORK, AND I LOST EVERYTHING.
APPARENTLY LIFE ISN'T THAT EASY.
...ER, I GUESS THAT BIT'S ABOUT ME.


ZZZZ...

SHE FELL ASLEEP...


NINA?
HUH?

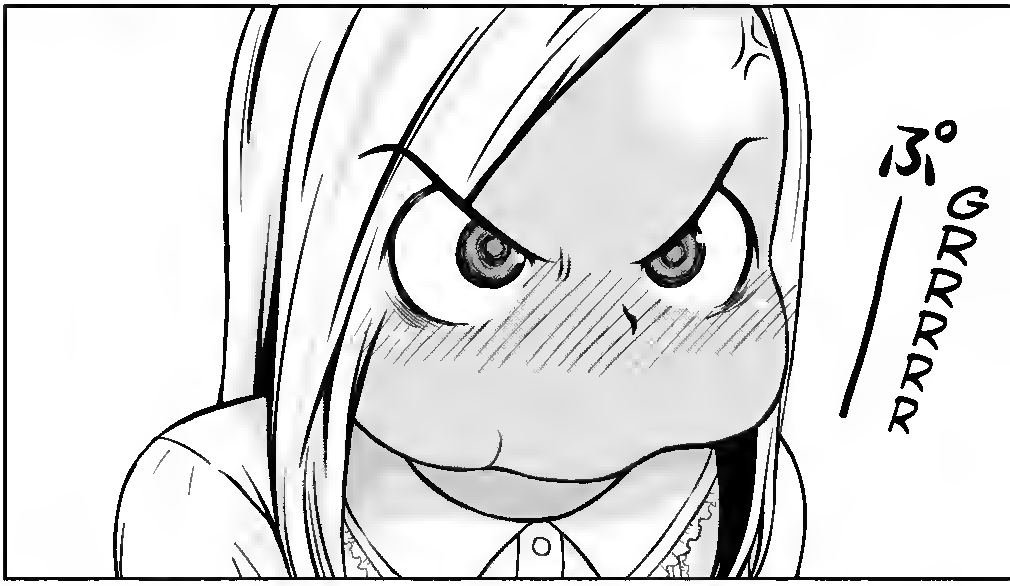

AND COMING TO JAPAN BY HERSELF BECAUSE OF THAT...
WANTING TO BECOME AN AKIBA IDOL OR A PRETTY CAN,

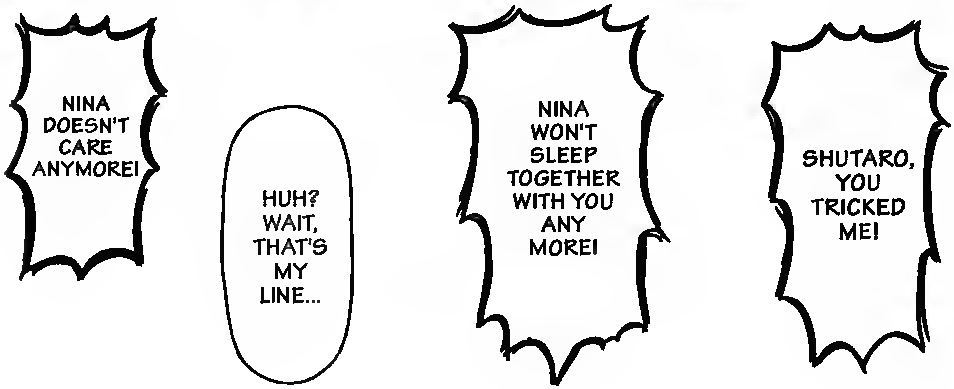
YOU REALLY ARE YOUR MOTHER'S CHILD.
JEEZ...
...

LET ME SLEEP A LITTLE LONGER...
WHAT IS IT, NINA?
SHUTARO.
WAKE UP.
SOME-THING'S WRONG

AAAAAAH!
BOO!
A GHOST!
NINA IS...
WHA—
HUFF
HUFF
AHAHA!
YOU FELL FOR IT!
SHE WAS SO SCARED LAST NIGHT...
KIDS APPARENTLY GET OVER THINGS QUICKLY
HUGE SUCCESS!
DAMN IT..

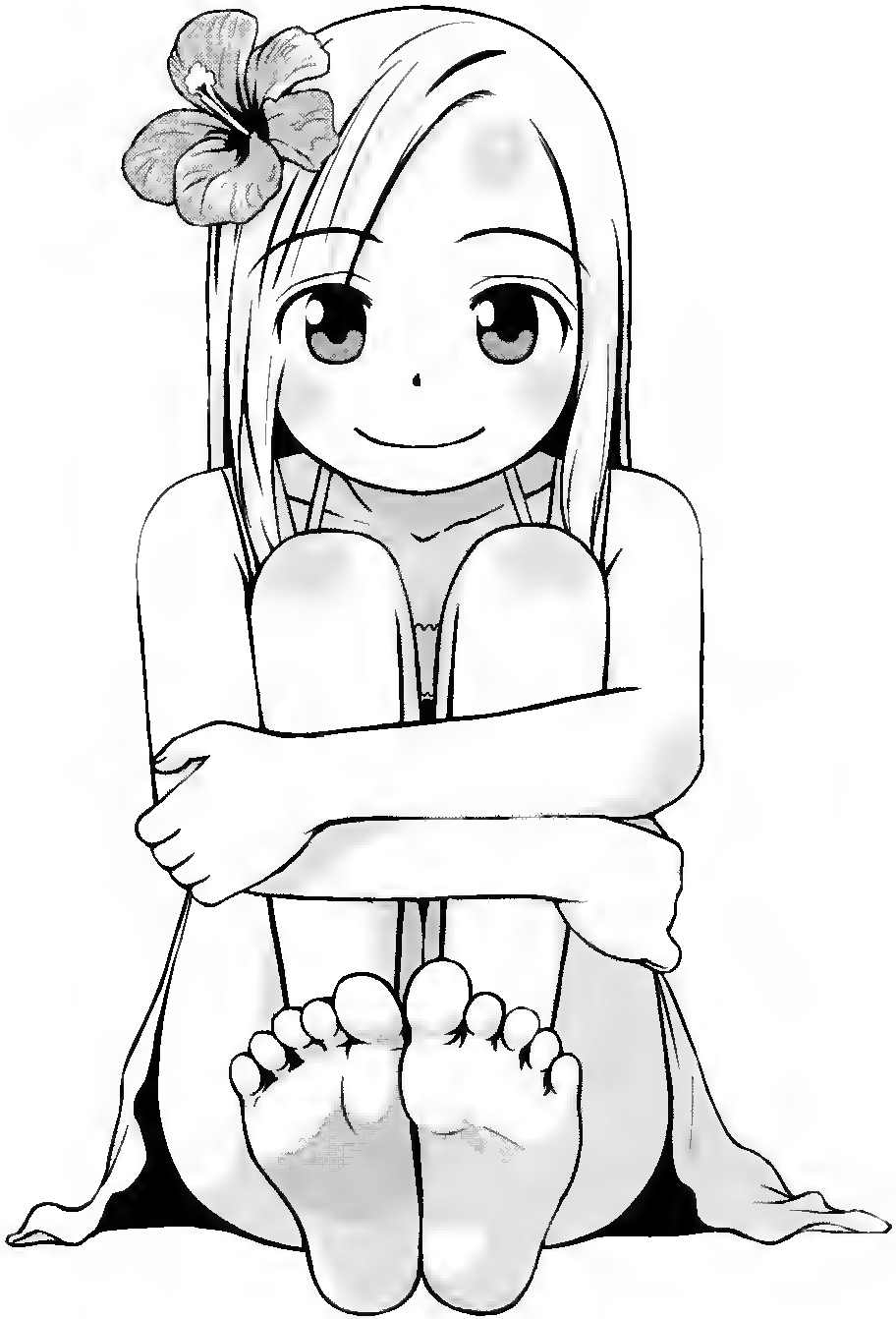
A MINOR COUNTER-ATTACK.
NINA, DID YOU KNOW THAT...
IF YOU MIMIC A GHOST LIKE THAT IN JAPAN, A REAL GHOST WILL VISIT?
HUH?
YOU'RE JOKING RIGHT, SHUTARO?
THAT CAN'T BE TRUE


13° GRRRR

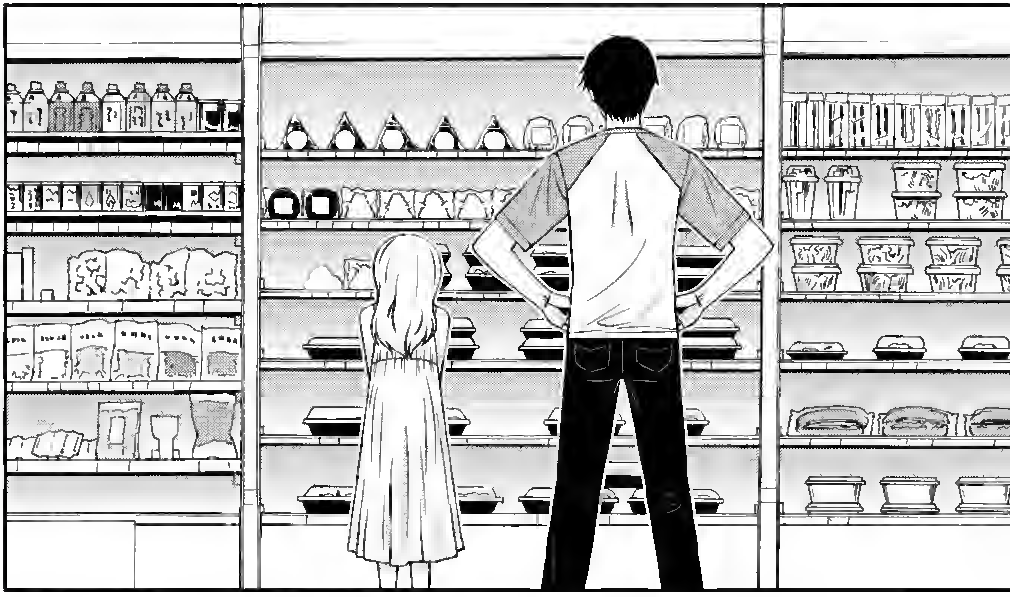

SHUTARO, YOU TRICKED ME!
NINA WON'T SLEEP TOGETHER WITH YOU ANY MORE!
HUH? WAIT, THAT'S MY LINE...
NINA DOESN'T CARE ANYMORE!

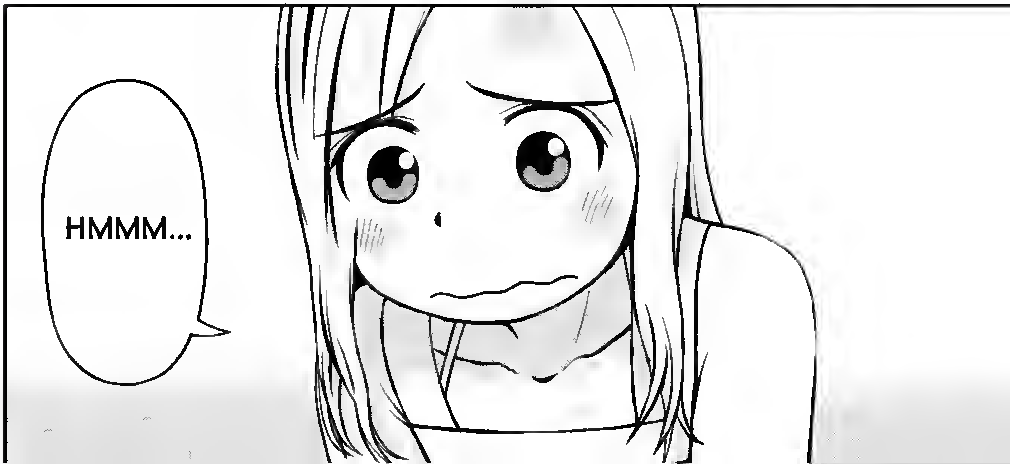
CHAPTER 11

A CHALLENGE!



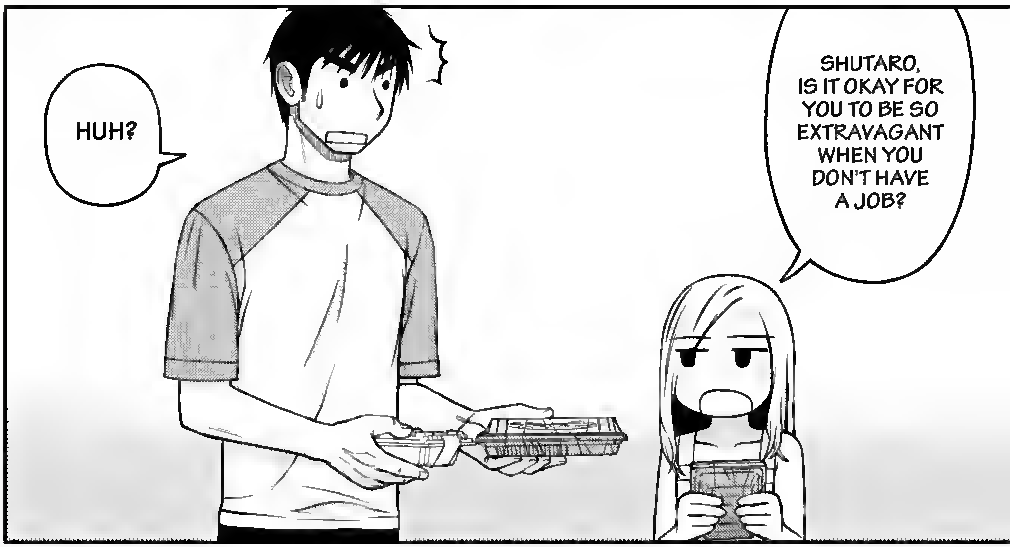
SAVE OK

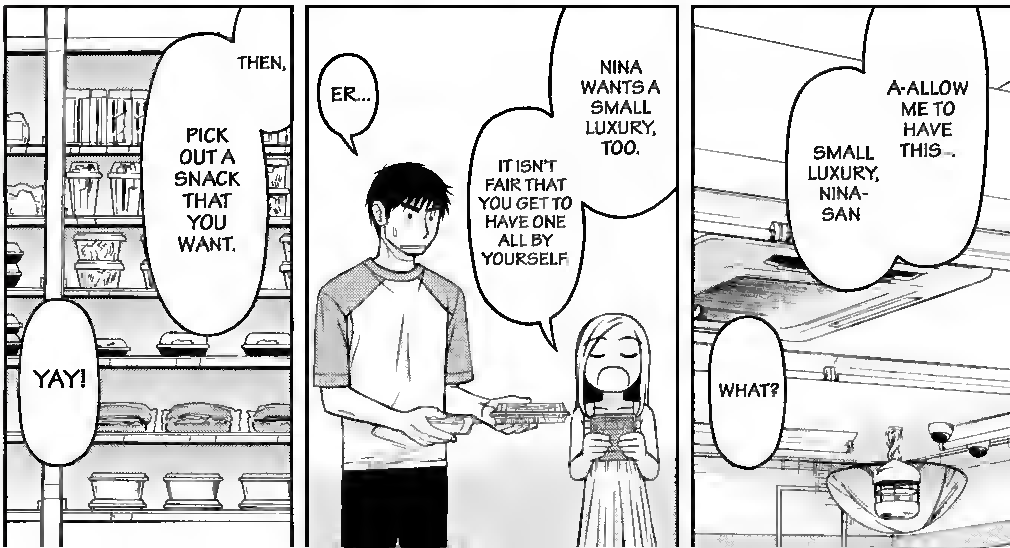


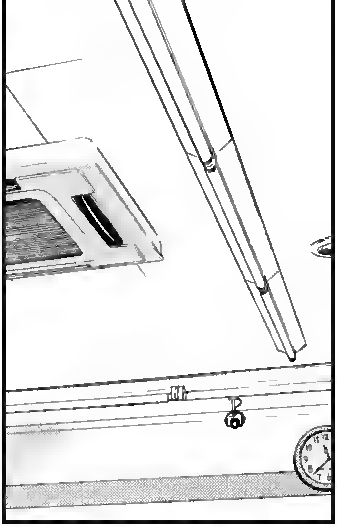

HMMM...

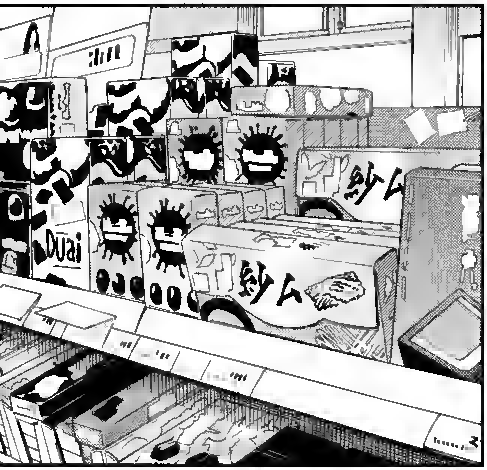
*SOBORO IS A SCRAMBLE, A TRI-COLOR SOBORO BENTO USUALLY INCLUDES BEEF, EGG, AND VEGGIES
NINA WILL HAVE THE TRI-COLOR SOBORO BENTO*!
NINA DECIDED!
* COD ROE
I'M GONNA HAVE THE MENTAIKO* SPAGHETTI.
OOOH.
WHAT ARE YOU HAVING, SHUTARO?
ME?
AND ..
MENTAIKO SPAGHETTI IS SO GOOD
RIGHT?

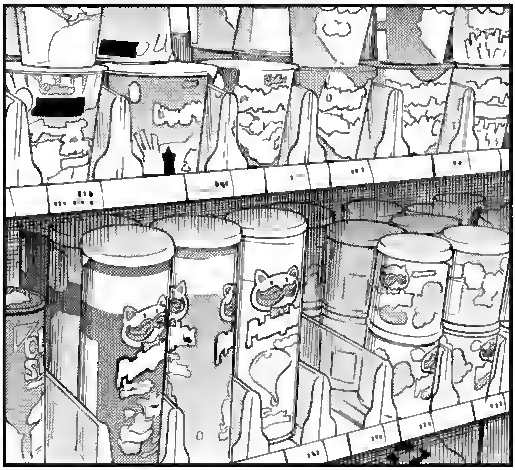
I'M TOTALLY ADDING A TUNA SALAD TODAY.
TA-DA!


HUH?
SHUTARO, IS IT OKAY FOR YOU TO BE SO EXTRAVAGANT WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE A JOB?

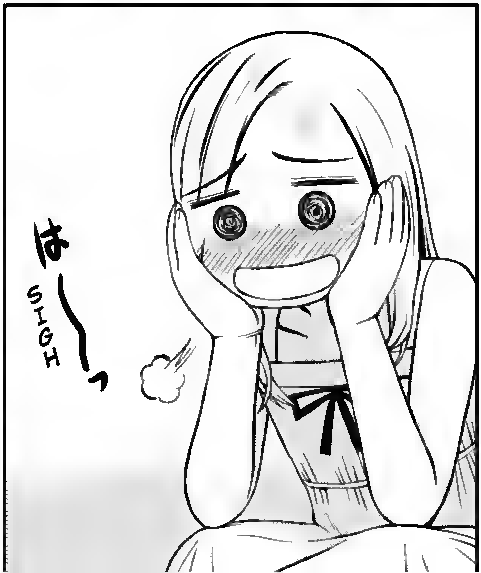

THEN, PICK OUT A SNACK THAT YOU WANT.
YAY!
ER...
NINA WANTS A SMALL LUXURY, TOO.
IT ISN'T FAIR THAT YOU GET TO HAVE ONE ALL BY YOURSELF.
A-ALLOW ME TO HAVE THIS—.
SMALL LUXURY, NINA-SAN
WHAT?

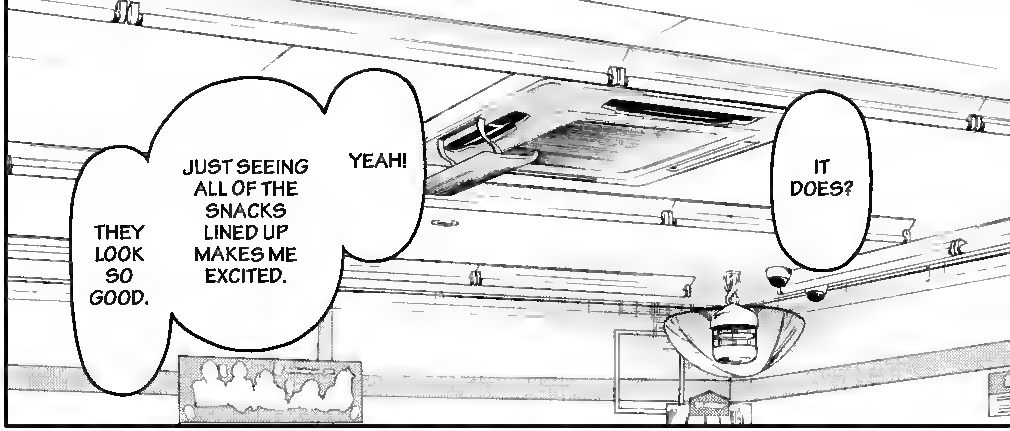



Dual

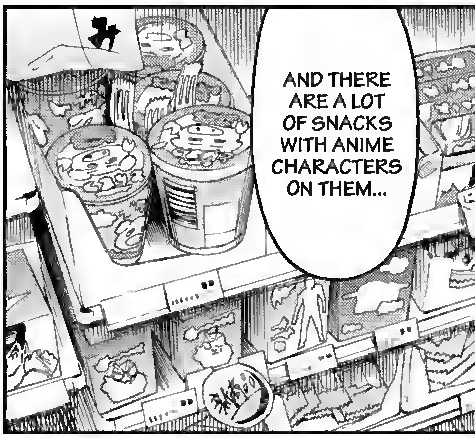


SHUTARO
WHY DOES THE CONVENIENCE STORE SNACK CORNER MAKE ME SO EXCITED?
HUH?

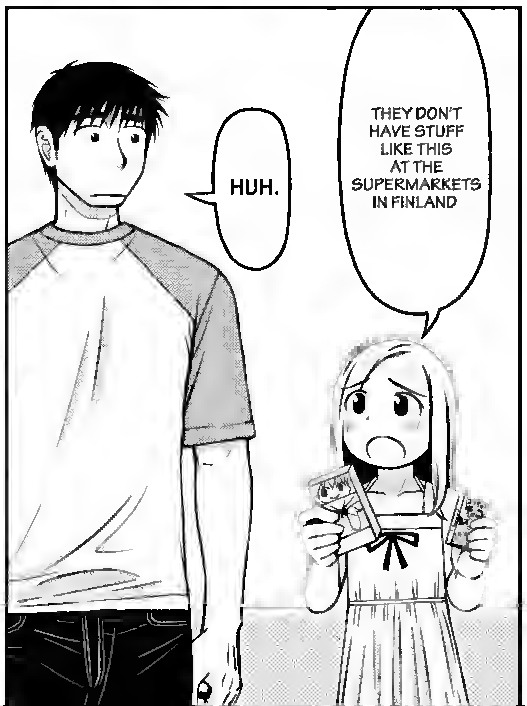

はーっ
SIGH


IT DOES?
YEAH!
JUST SEEING ALL OF THE SNACKS LINED UP MAKES ME EXCITED.
THEY LOOK SO GOOD.

IT'S LIKE HEAVEN ON EARTH.


AND THERE ARE A LOT OF SNACKS WITH ANIME CHARACTERS ON THEM...

WELL,
I GUESS...


THEY DON'T HAVE STUFF LIKE THIS AT THE SUPERMARKETS IN FINLAND
HUH.

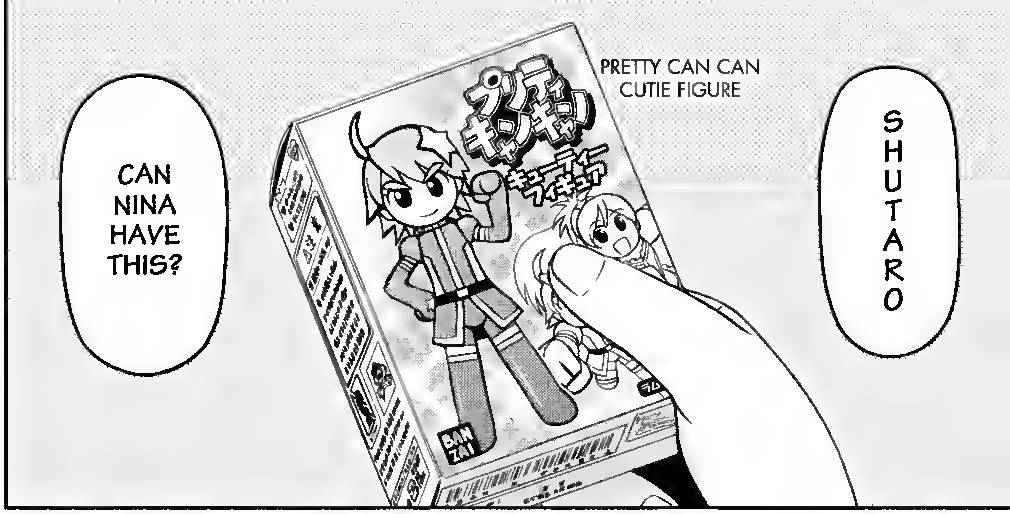
I GET EXCITED ABOUT THE OTSUMAMI* CORNER.
* SNACKS THAT ARE EATEN WHILE DRINKING ALCOHOL

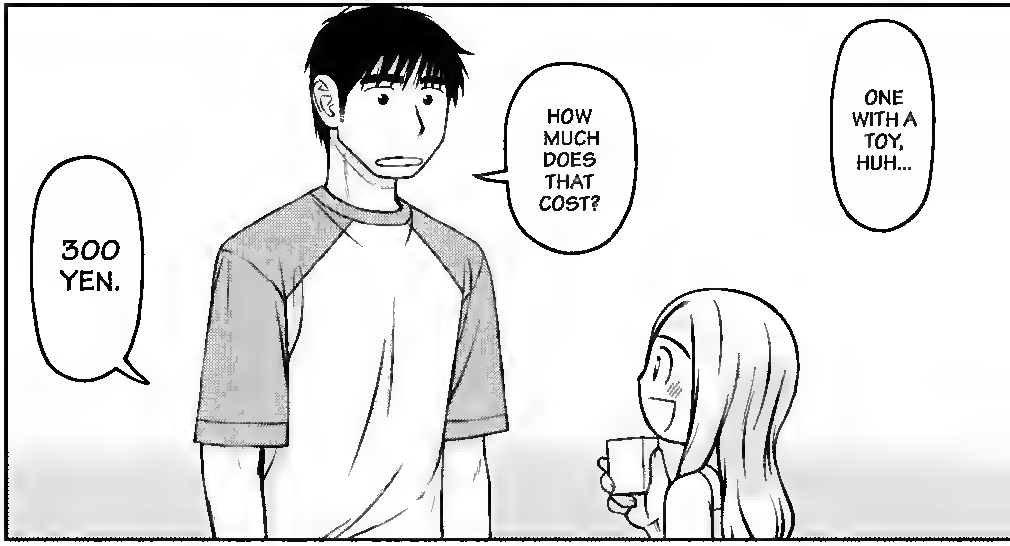
* CHEESE STRIPS MIXED WITH BITS OF COD (TARAKO)
WHICH KINDS OF OTSUMAMI DO YOU LIKE, SHUTARO?
I LIKE SPICY RICE CRACKERS THE MOST...
BUT I LIKE THE CHEESE TARA*, TOO.
I ALSO LIKE SLICED SALAMI, PISTACHIOS, AND THE MIXED NUTS.

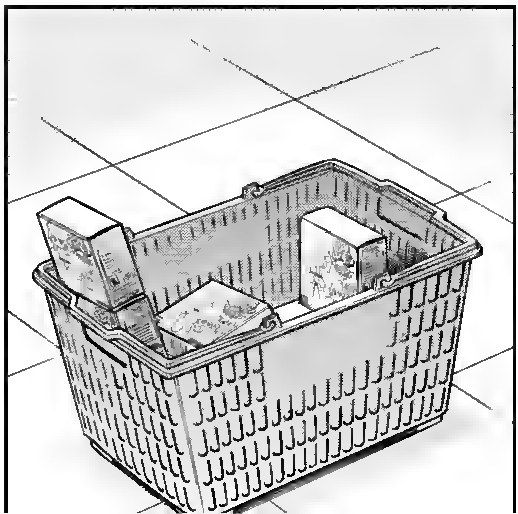
GUESS I'LL BUY SOME OTSUMAMI, TOO
HEY, NO FAIR!

...

NINA'S GOING TO BUY SNACKS, TOO.
SURE.

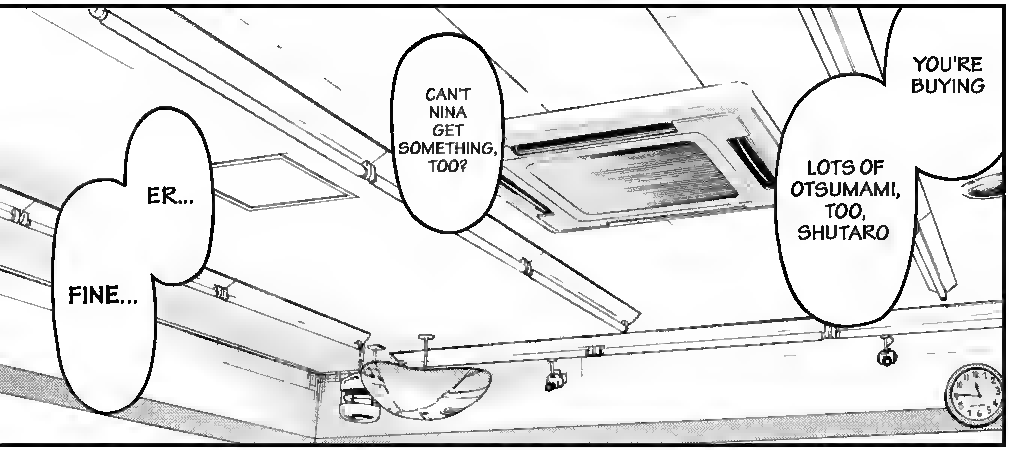

PRETTY CAN CAN
CUTIE FIGURE
SHUTARO
CAN NINA HAVE THIS?


ONE WITH A TOY, HUH...
HOW MUCH DOES THAT COST?
300 YEN.

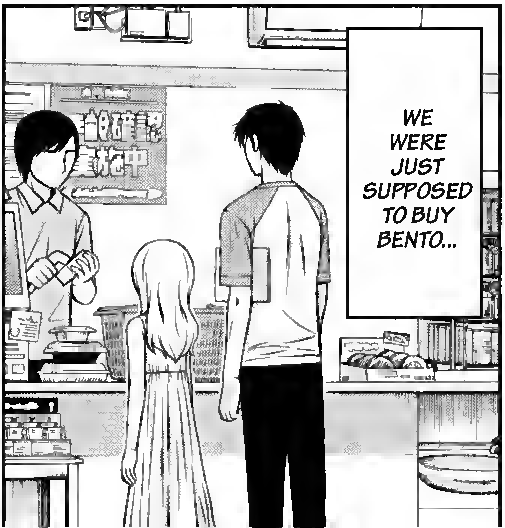


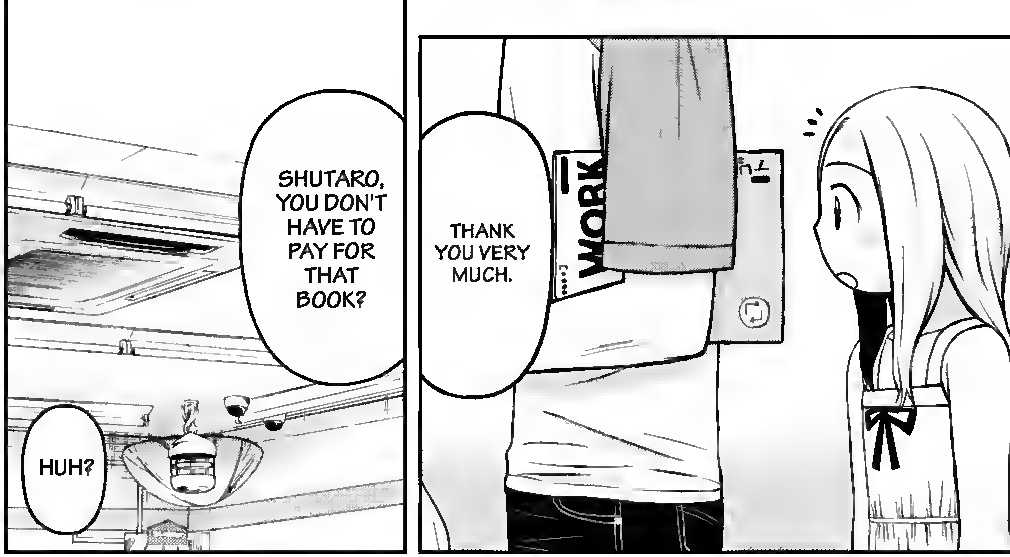
OKAY.
THEN GO AHEAD AND PUT IT IN THE BASKET.

WELL IF YOU DON'T BUY ALL 4, YOU WON'T HAVE A COMPLETE SET.
YOU'RE... BUYING 4 OF THEM?
HEY!


ER... FINE...
CAN'T NINA GET SOMETHING, TOO?
YOU'RE BUYING LOTS OF OTSUMAMI, TOO, SHUTARO

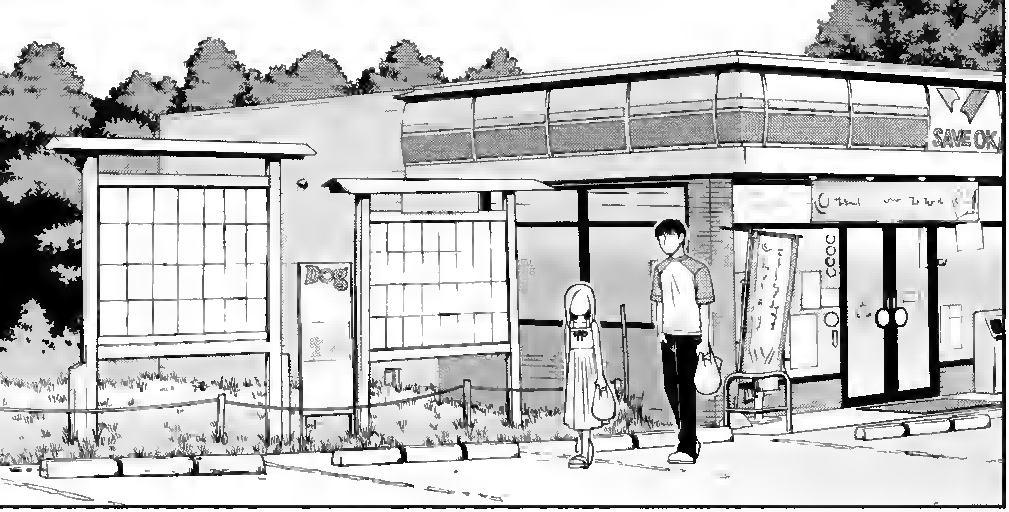
THAT'LL BE 3,398 YEN, PLEASE.
TALK ABOUT EXPENSES...
WORK


WE WERE JUST SUPPOSED TO BUY BENTO...

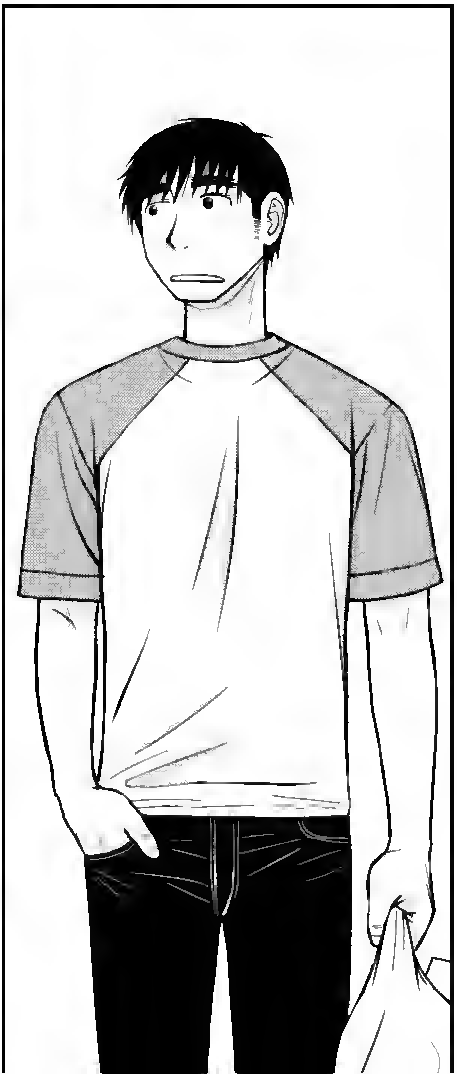

SHUTARO, YOU DON'T HAVE TO PAY FOR THAT BOOK?
HUH?
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
WORK

JOB LISTINGS?
IT'S GOT JOB LISTINGS IN IT.
WORK
NO.
THIS IS A FREE MAGAZINE.

REALLY?
I'VE ALWAYS INTENDED TO WORK.
YOU'VE FINALLY DECIDED TO WORK, SHUTARO?
H-HEY! DON'T MAKE IT SOUND SO BAD.
WORK


SAVE OK

NINA, HOLD ON A SECOND.



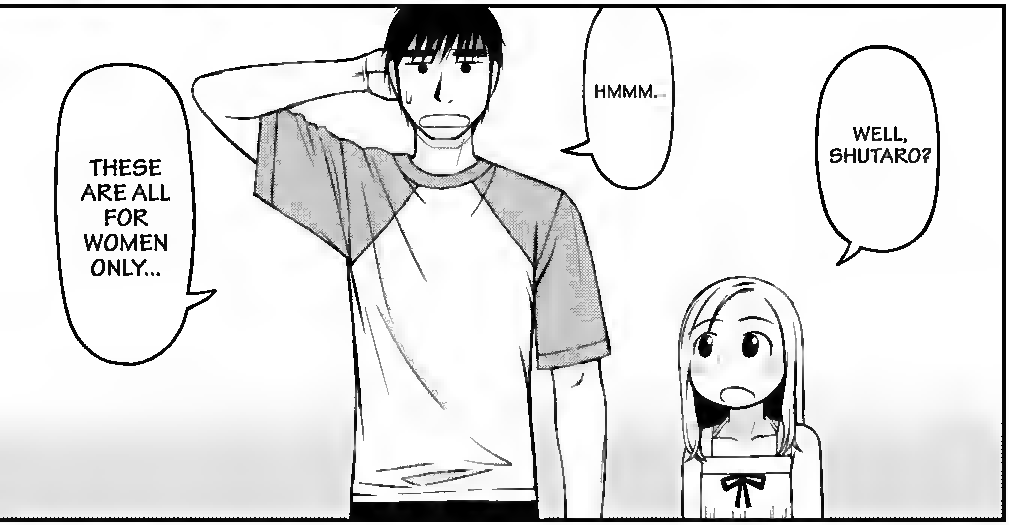
IS SOMETHING WRONG, SHUTARO?

北軽井沢掲示板
NORTH KARUIZAWA BULLETIN BOARD
WHAT'S THIS?
IT'S A BULLETIN BOARD FOR LOCAL JOBS.
軽井沢より仔犬を愛い方へ

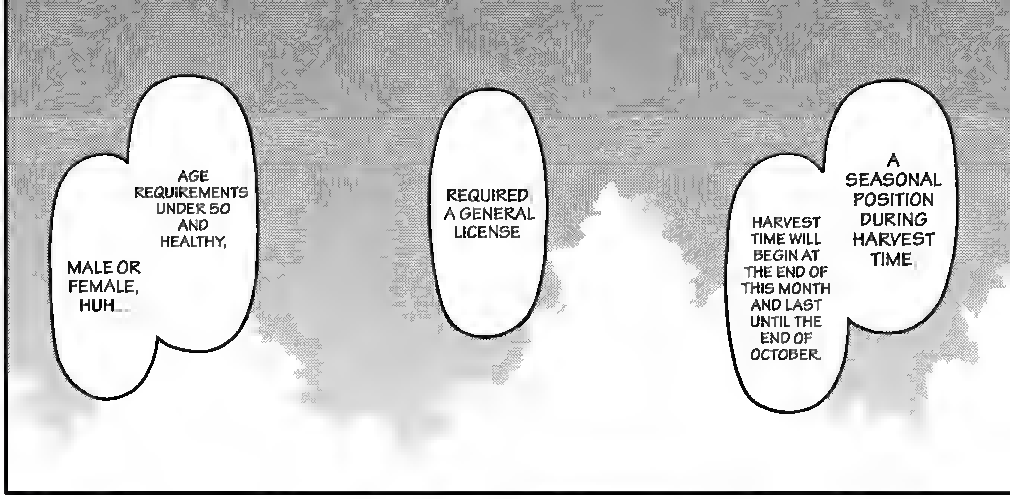
LET'S SEE...

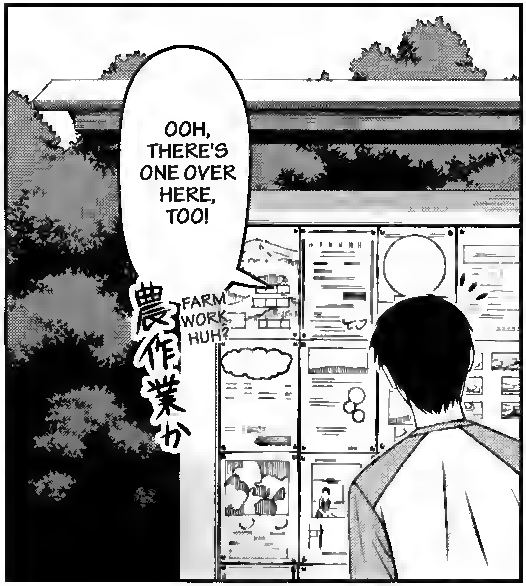
I TOTALLY FORGOT THIS EXISTED.
I GUESS I CAN SEARCH FOR JOBS ON HERE, TOO.

BREAD AND SANDWICH MAKING ASSISTANT.
REGISTER DUTY.
募集
FRONT OF HOUSE RESTAURANT STAFF
HOTEL HOUSE-KEEPING.
急
パート・ア
リゾートホテ
勤務地:〇〇ア
時給:９５０円
時間:１０:０
注:女性のみの


THESE ARE ALL FOR WOMEN ONLY...
HMMM...
WELL, SHUTARO?

LET'S SEE...
HERE WE GO.
HM?
●資格 普
●年齢 50
MALE OR FEMALE 男女問わず
※詳細は電話でお問
PLEASE CALL FOR DETAILS

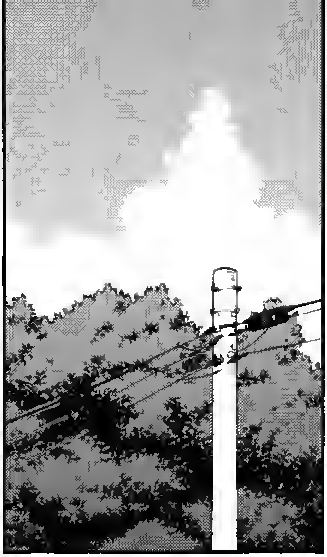

A SEASONAL POSITION DURING HARVEST TIME.
HARVEST TIME WILL BEGIN AT THE END OF THIS MONTH AND LAST UNTIL THE END OF OCTOBER.
REQUIRED A GENERAL LICENSE
AGE REQUIREMENTS UNDER 50 AND HEALTHY,
MALE OR FEMALE, HUH...


OOH, THERE'S ONE OVER HERE, TOO!
FARM WORK, HUH?
農作業か

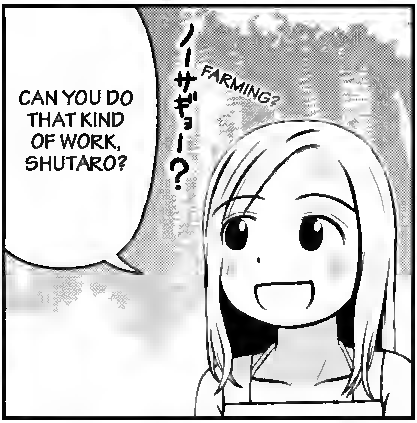
I'LL TAKE A PICTURE OF IT.
CLICK

WORK THAT STARTS AT 4 A.M., SERIOUSLY?
DANG..
うえぇ...
Dog
AGE REQUIREMENTS UNDER 50
MALE OR FEMALE
HOURS OF WORK
4 A.M. ~ 12 P.M.
AROUND 8 HOURS
勤務場
○○周
年齢
50歳ま
性別は問
勤務時間
朝4時から昼12
8時間程
※詳細は電話でお問い合
THIS ONE...
IF YOU LOOK, I GUESS THERE ARE SOME JOBS.

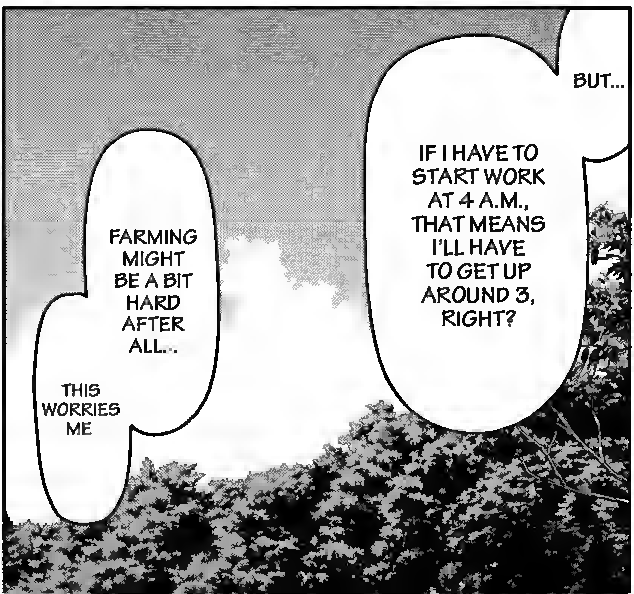
SHUTARO, DID YOU FIND A GOOD JOB?
THERE WERE TWO PART-TIME FARMING JOBS...



DUNNO.
I PROBABLY CAN'T DO ANY OF THE TECHNICAL STUFF, BUT IT SHOULD BE FINE.

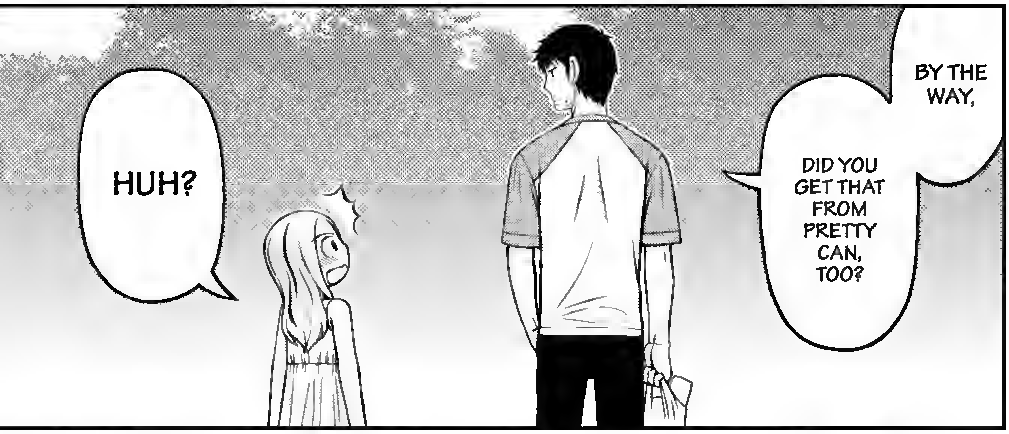

CAN YOU DO THAT KIND OF WORK, SHUTARO?
ノーサギョー?
FARMING?

BUT...
でもなぁ...
HMM...
うーん
SHUTARO

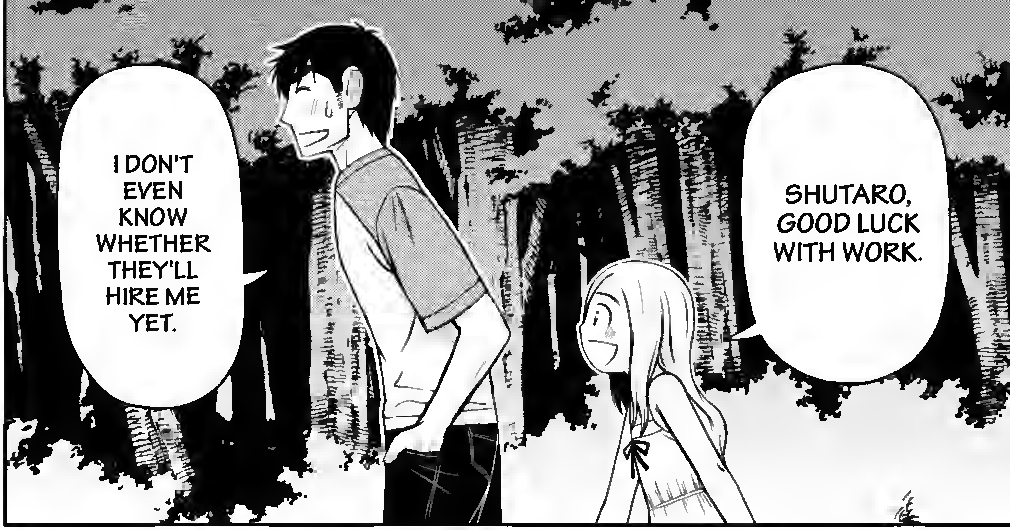

BUT...
IF I HAVE TO START WORK AT 4 A.M., THAT MEANS I'LL HAVE TO GET UP AROUND 3, RIGHT?
FARMING MIGHT BE A BIT HARD AFTER ALL...
THIS WORRIES ME

YOU SHOULD...
ALWAYS CHALLENGE YOURSELF.

THOSE ARE WISE WORDS, NINA.
RIGHT?
...
ALWAYS CHALLENGE MYSELF... HUH.

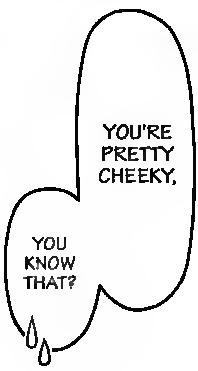

HUH?
BY THE WAY,
DID YOU GET THAT FROM PRETTY CAN, TOO?

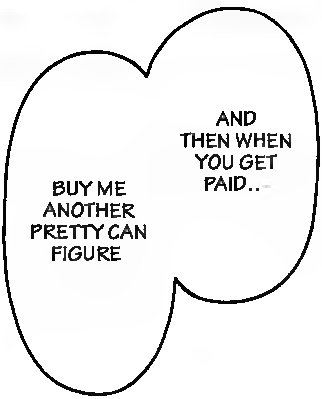
I'M JUST GOING TO REMEMBER THOSE WORDS
AS IF YOU SAID THEM. .
WELL,
WHATEVER
NINA JUST THOUGHT OF IT NOW.
LIAR!

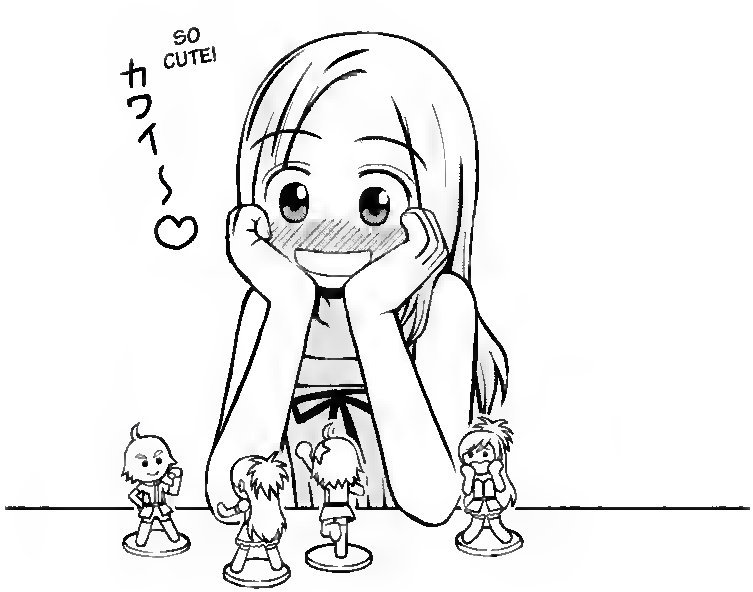

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHETHER THEY'LL HIRE ME YET.
SHUTARO, GOOD LUCK WITH WORK.

THANKS, NINA.

YOU CAN DO IT, SHUTARO.
IT'LL BE FINE.


YOU'RE PRETTY CHEEKY,
YOU KNOW THAT?

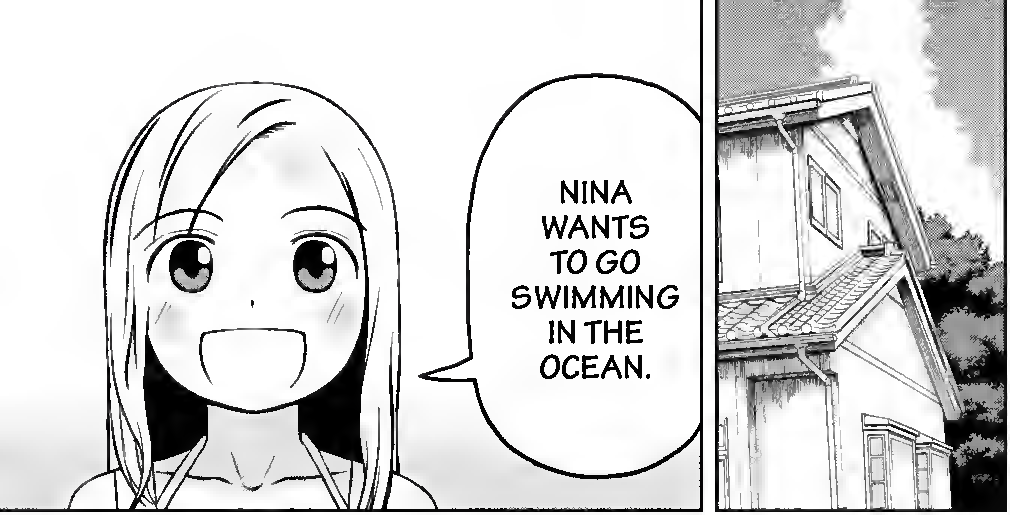

AND THEN WHEN YOU GET PAID..
BUY ME ANOTHER PRETTY CAN FIGURE


SO CUTE!
カワイ～♡

CHAPTER 12

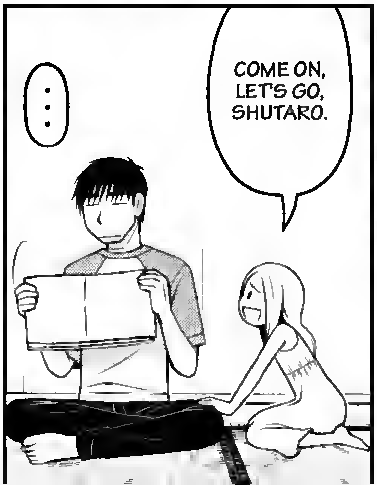
PLAYING BY THE WATERFRONT

S I L V E R N I N A


NINA WANTS TO GO SWIMMING IN THE OCEAN.

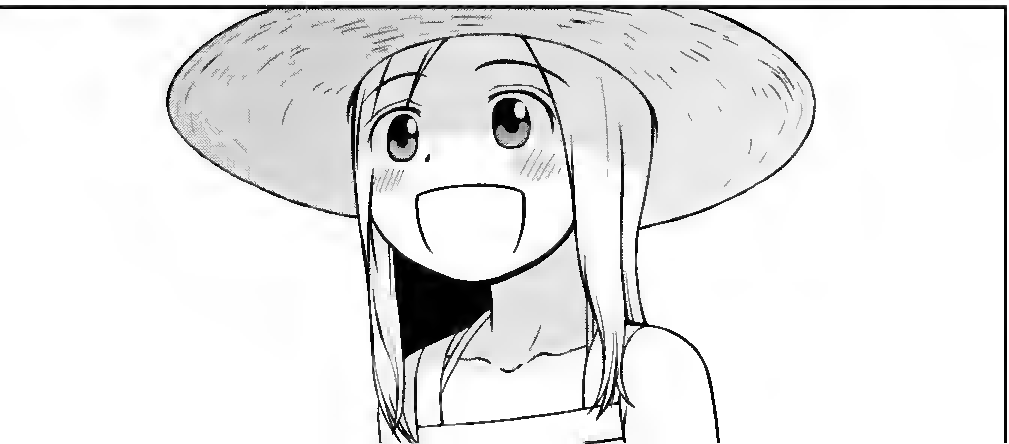
THEY SAID THAT JAPANESE GIRLS GO SWIMMING IN THE OCEAN IN THE SUMMER.
ON PRETTY CAN YESTERDAY, THEY WENT SWIMMING IN THE OCEAN.

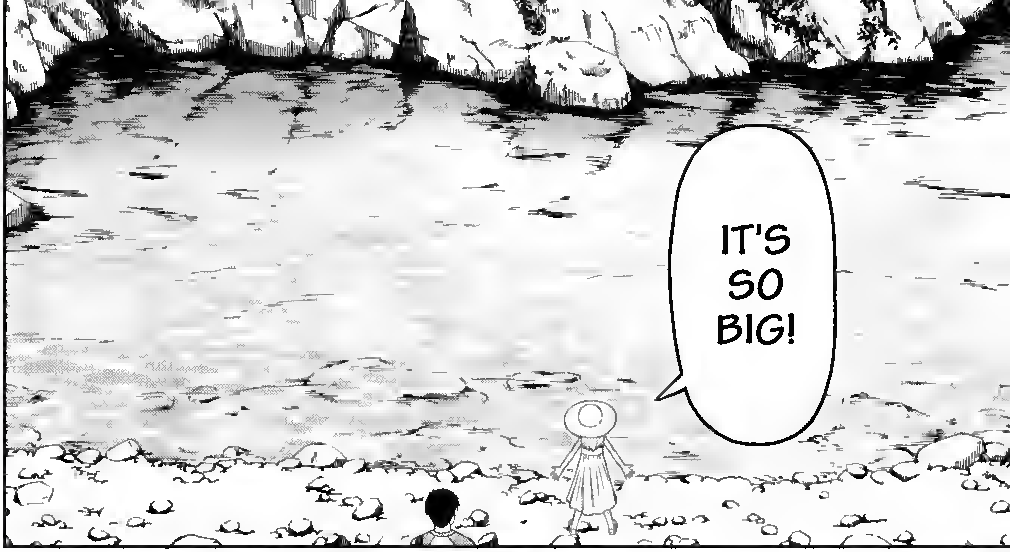
NINA,
I HATE TO BREAK IT TO YOU, BUT—

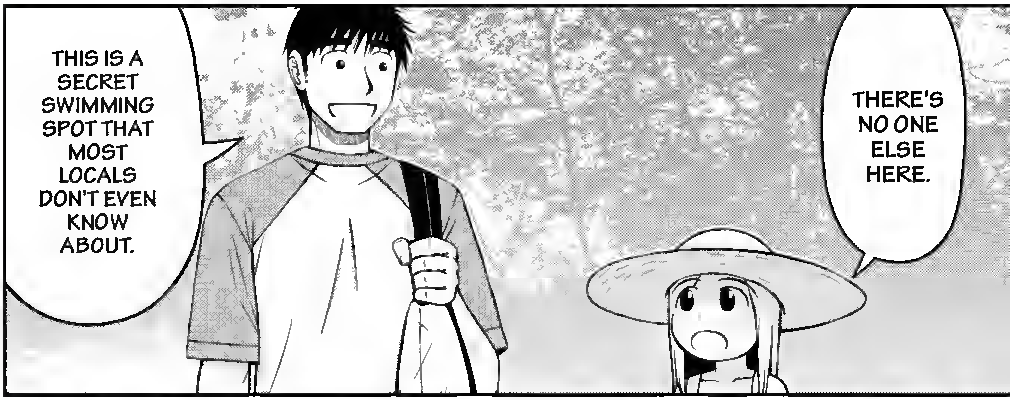

COME ON, LET'S GO, SHUTARO.
...

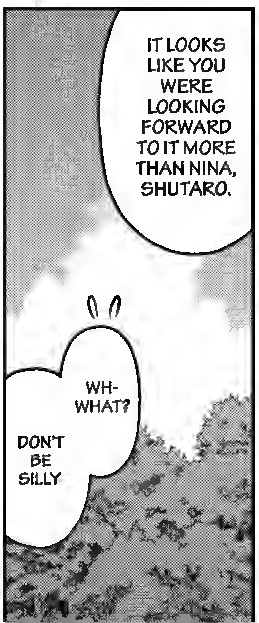
?
THERE'S NO OCEAN NEAR THIS PREFECTURE.
MEANING THAT.
WE'D HAVE TO DRIVE PRETTY FAR, AND WE'D HAVE TO SPEND MONEY ON GAS...
JUST TO GET TO THE OCEAN.
WE DON'T HAVE A CAR TO BEGIN WITH.
AND GOING BY TRAIN WOULD BE PRETTY ROUGH TOO.
SO GIVE UP ON SWIMMING IN THE OCEAN.
AWW...
NINA WANNA GO! NINA WANNA GO!
NINA WANTS TO GO TO THE OCEAN!
YOU CAN THROW A TANTRUM IF YOU WANT. NO MEANS NO.

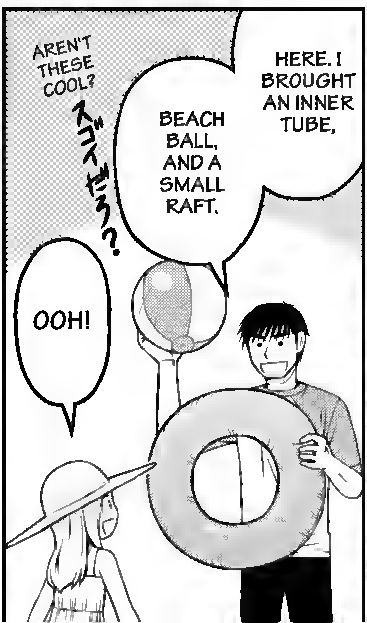
NINA WANTED TO GO PLAY IN THE WATER!
NINA WANTED TO GO PLAY IN THE WATER!
もーっ
UGH!
FLAIL
FLAIL




IT'S SO BIG!


THIS IS A SECRET SWIMMING SPOT THAT MOST LOCALS DON'T EVEN KNOW ABOUT.
THERE'S NO ONE ELSE HERE.


IT LOOKS LIKE YOU WERE LOOKING FORWARD TO IT MORE THAN NINA, SHUTARO.
WH-WHAT?
DON'T BE SILLY

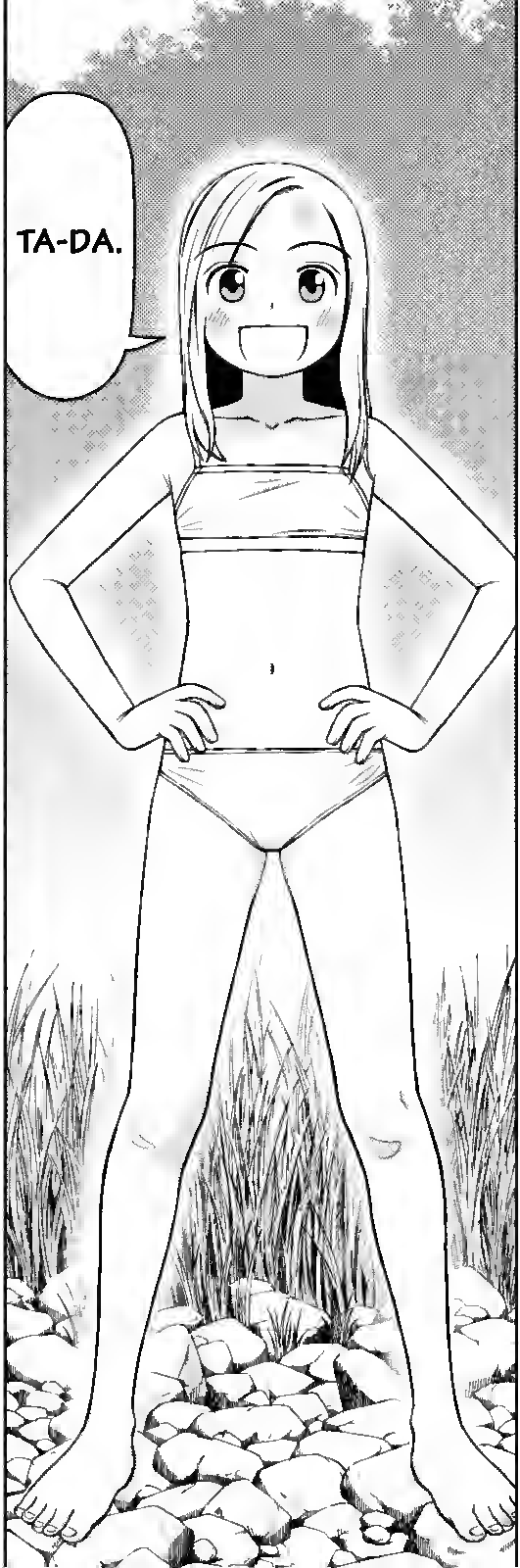

AREN'T THESE COOL?
スゴイだろ?
HERE. I BROUGHT AN INNER TUBE, BEACH BALL, AND A SMALL RAFT.
OOH!

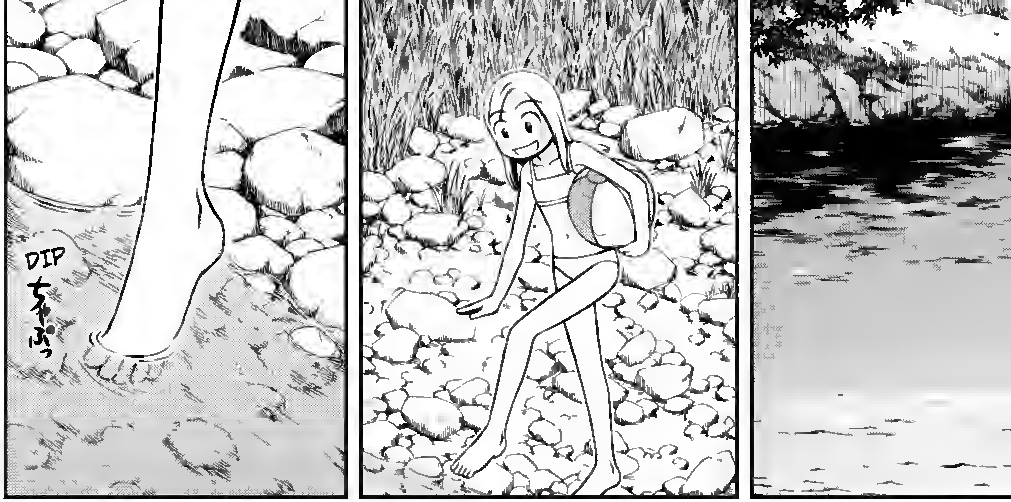
IT'S NOT AS LIVELY AS THE OCEAN
BUT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO RELAX AND PLAY IN THE WATER.
YEAH.

HEY, SHUTARO. DOES THIS LOOK GOOD ON NINA?
WOW.

THAT'S PRETTY CUTE.
I'D EXPECT NOTHING LESS FROM A FUTURE AKIBA IDOL.
TE HE HE

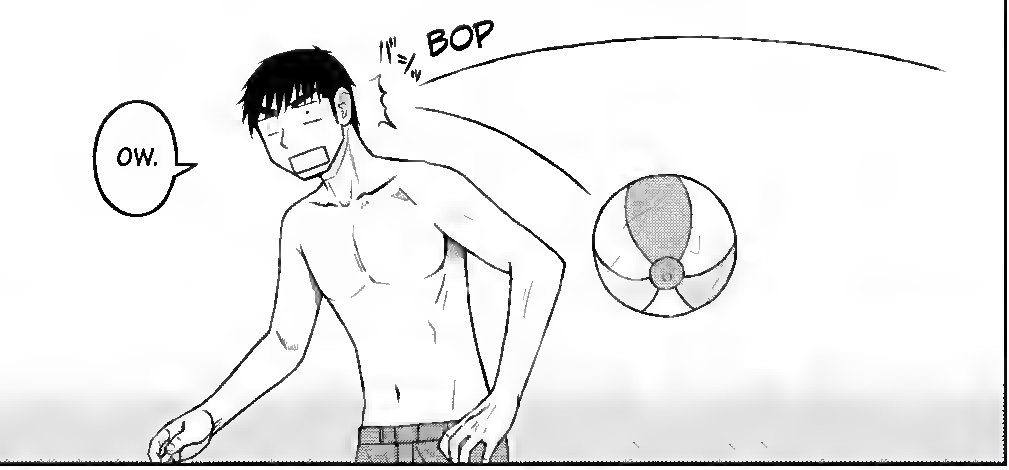
ALL RIGHT. WE'LL DO SOME LIGHT STRETCHING, THEN WE'LL GO PLAY IN THE WATER.
OKAY!
STRETCH


TA-DA.

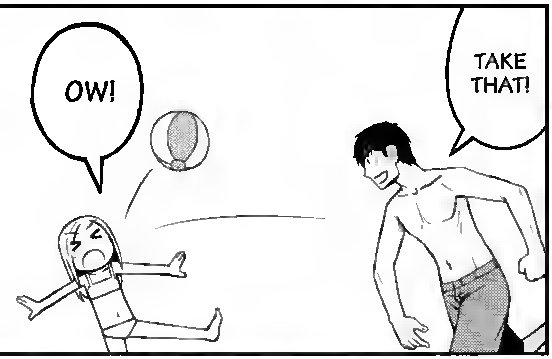

DIP
ちゃぷっ

IT'S SO COLD!

SMIRK
ニヤッ
I'M GONNA BLOW UP THE INFLATABLE RAFT, BUT YOU GO AHEAD AND PLAY.
SQUEAK
キュッ
SQUEAK
キュッ
COME ON, SHUTARO, HURRY!


OW.
BOP

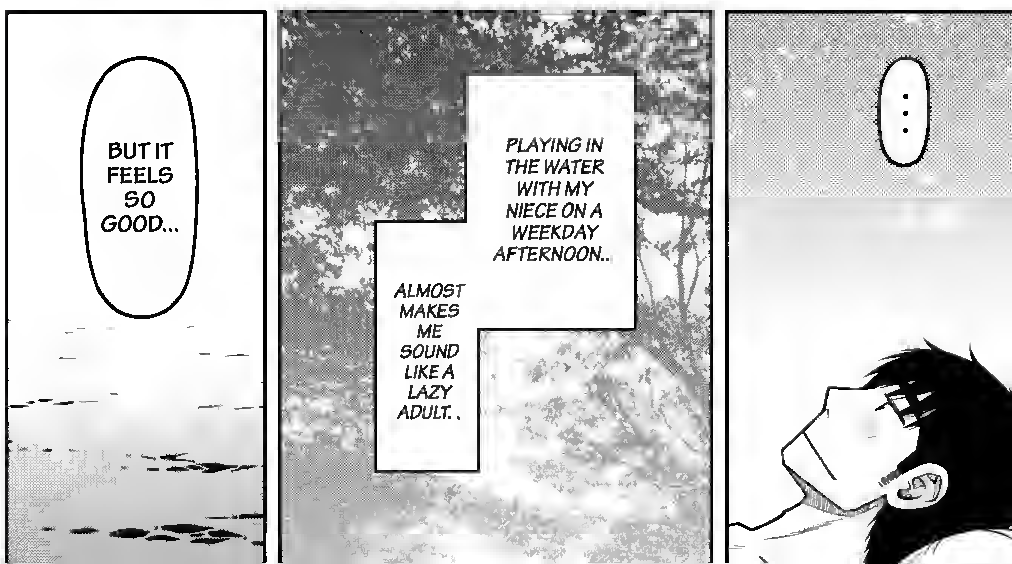
WHAT KIND OF RULE IS THAT?
"IT"?
YOU'RE IT!
SHUTARO,

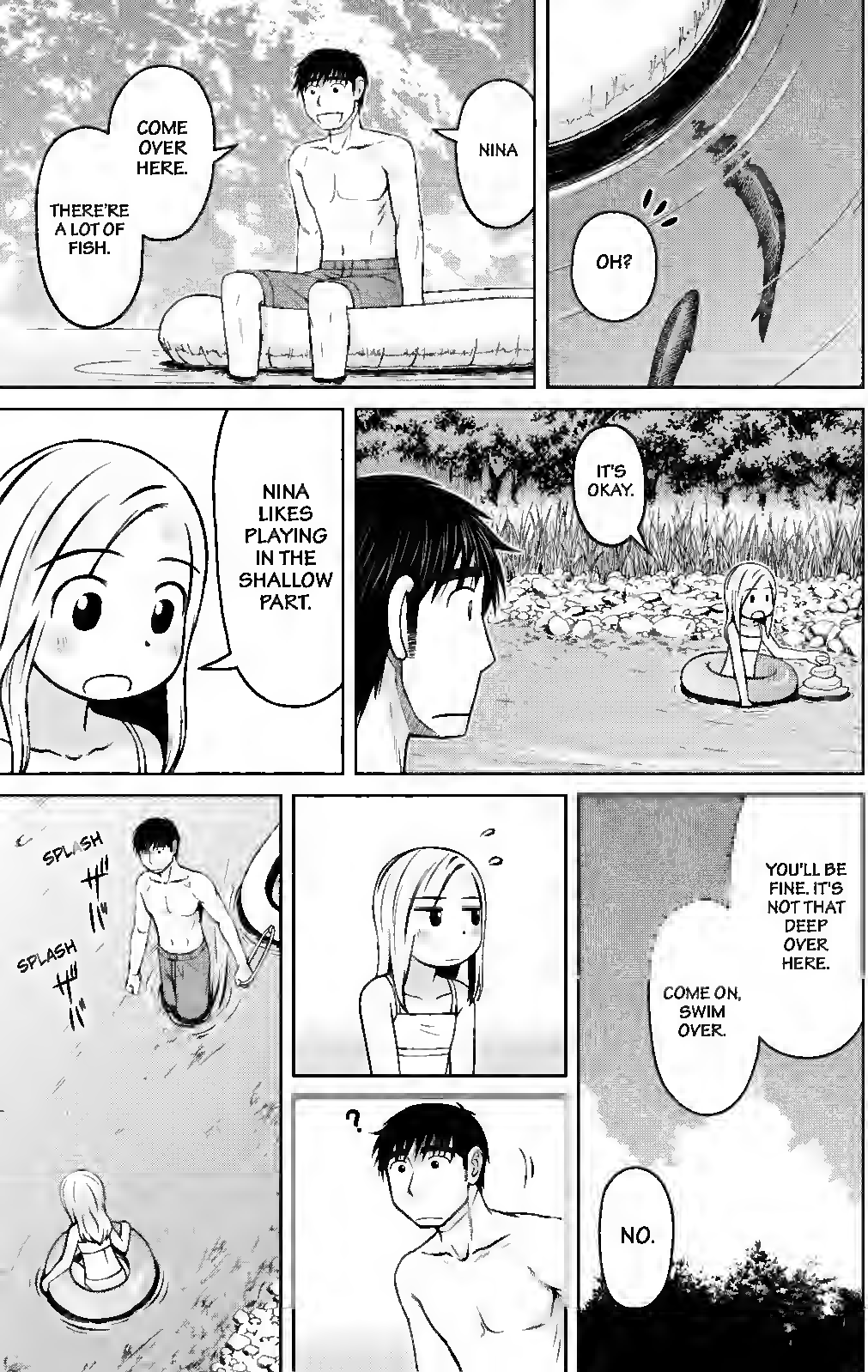

OW!
TAKE THAT!

NOW YOU'VE DONE IT, SHUTARO!
やったな シューターロー
SQUEE キャッ
SQUEE キャッ

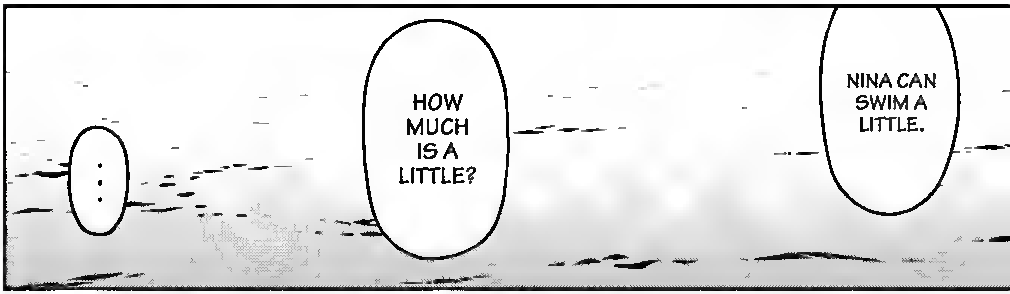
YOU'VE GOT SOME NERVE, THROWING A BEACH-BALL AT ME!
NYA NYA!

SIGH...
THIS IS...
THE LIFE.

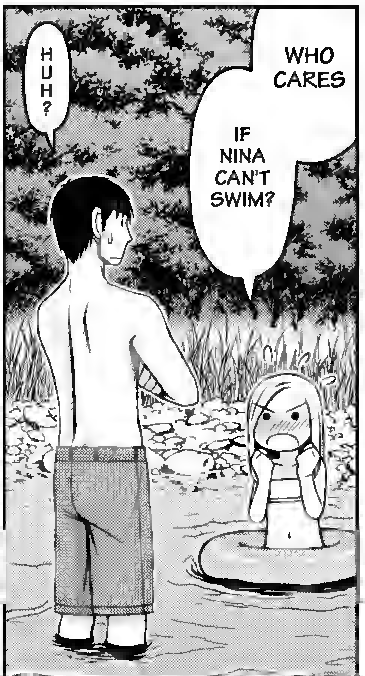

...
PLAYING IN THE WATER WITH MY NIECE ON A WEEKDAY AFTERNOON..
ALMOST MAKES ME SOUND LIKE A LAZY ADULT..
BUT IT FEELS SO GOOD...

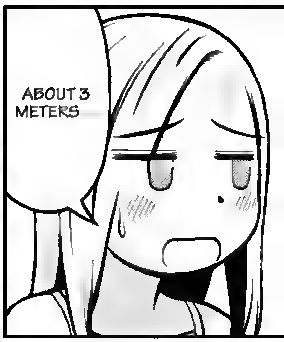

NINA
COME OVER HERE.
THERE'RE A LOT OF FISH.
OH?
NINA LIKES PLAYING IN THE SHALLOW PART.
IT'S OKAY.
SPLISH
SPLASH
?
YOU'LL BE FINE. IT'S NOT THAT DEEP OVER HERE.
COME ON, SWIM OVER.
NO.

COULD IT BE ..?
CAN YOU NOT SWIM?


NINA CAN SWIM A LITTLE.
HOW MUCH IS A LITTLE?
...

BUT.
WHEN YOU START SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER, YOU'LL HAVE SWIMMING CLASS
WON'T YOU BE EMBARRASSED IF YOU CAN'T SWIM THEN?
HUH?


HUH?
WHO CARES
IF NINA CAN'T SWIM?


ABOUT 3 METERS

THAT WOULDN'T BE CALLED SWIMMING

I THINK KIDS IN THE 4TH GRADE CAN SWIM ABOUT 25 METERS...
...
WELL...
WILL NINA'S CLASSMATES LAUGH AT HER?
WHY DON'T YOU START PRACTICING SWIMMING NOW?
WHAT IS NINA GONNA DO, SHUTARO?
YEAH, OKAY.
NINA WILL PRACTICE.
GOOD.

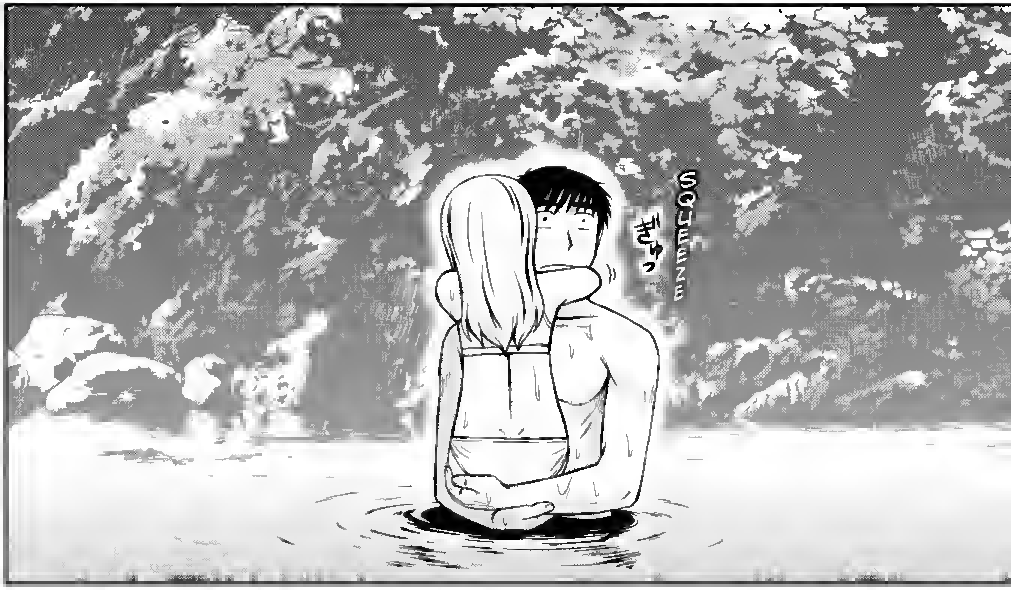
JUST LIKE THAT.
NICE, GOOD.
SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH
RELAX. YOU'RE DOING FINE.
SPLASH
SPLASH
N-
NINA IS SCARED
SPLASH
SPLASH
SHUTARO
SPLASH
NINA CAN'T DO THAT!
JUST GIVE IT A SHOT.
SPLASH
SPLASH
WHAT?!
ALL RIGHT. NOW, WHILE KICKING YOUR LEGS, TOUCH YOUR FACE TO THE WATER AND HOLD YOUR BREATH.
SPLASH
SPLASH

FWIP
GASP.
PLUNK
ちゃぷっ
SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH
...
SPLASH
SPLASH
ALL RIGHT.
ONE MORE TIME.
SEE? YOU CAN DO IT.
SPLASH
GASP.
SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH
JUST A LITTLE MORE. KEEP IT UP.
NINA'S
...LEGS ARE TIRED.
SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH
SHUTARO,
LET'S STOP NOW.
SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH

SEE?
LET GO
ぱっ
I'M GOING TO LET GO OF YOUR HANDS FOR A BIT.
DON'T LET GO!
HANDS?!
SPLASH
バチャ
SPLASH
バチャ
SPLASH
バチャ
HUH?
BUBBLES
ブク
BUBBLES
ブク
NO!
SPLASH
ばしゃ
DON'T!
SPLASH
ばしゃ
SPLASH
ばしゃ
SPLASH
ばしゃ
AAH!
BIG SPLASH
HELP M—
SPLASH
ばしゃ
SPLASH
ばしゃ
SHUTARO!
SPLASH
ばしゃ

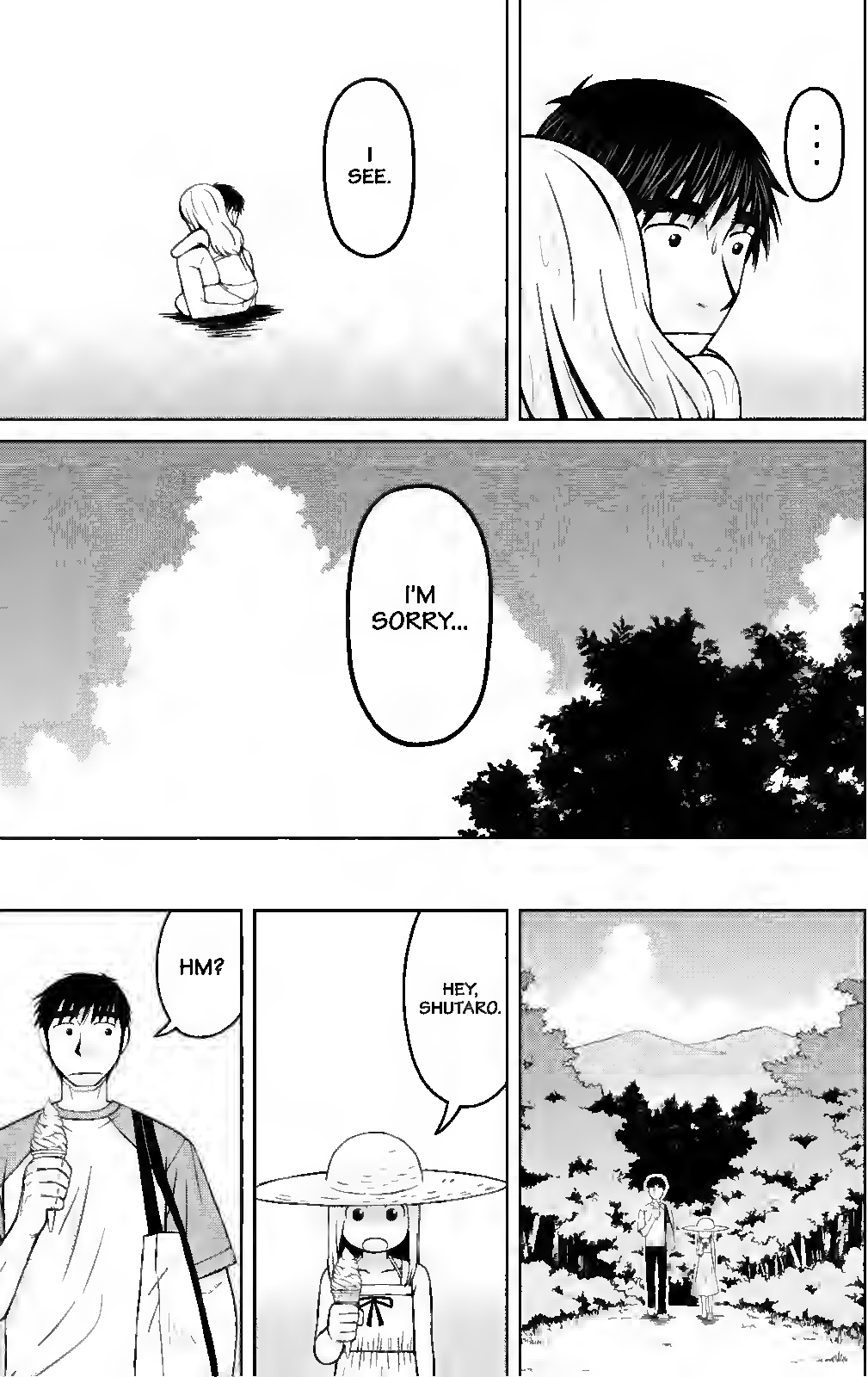
COUGH
COUGH
COUGH
COUGH
COUGH
BIG SPLASH
NINA, ARE YOU OKAY?
COUGH
COUGH
COUGH
COUGH
COUGH
COUGH

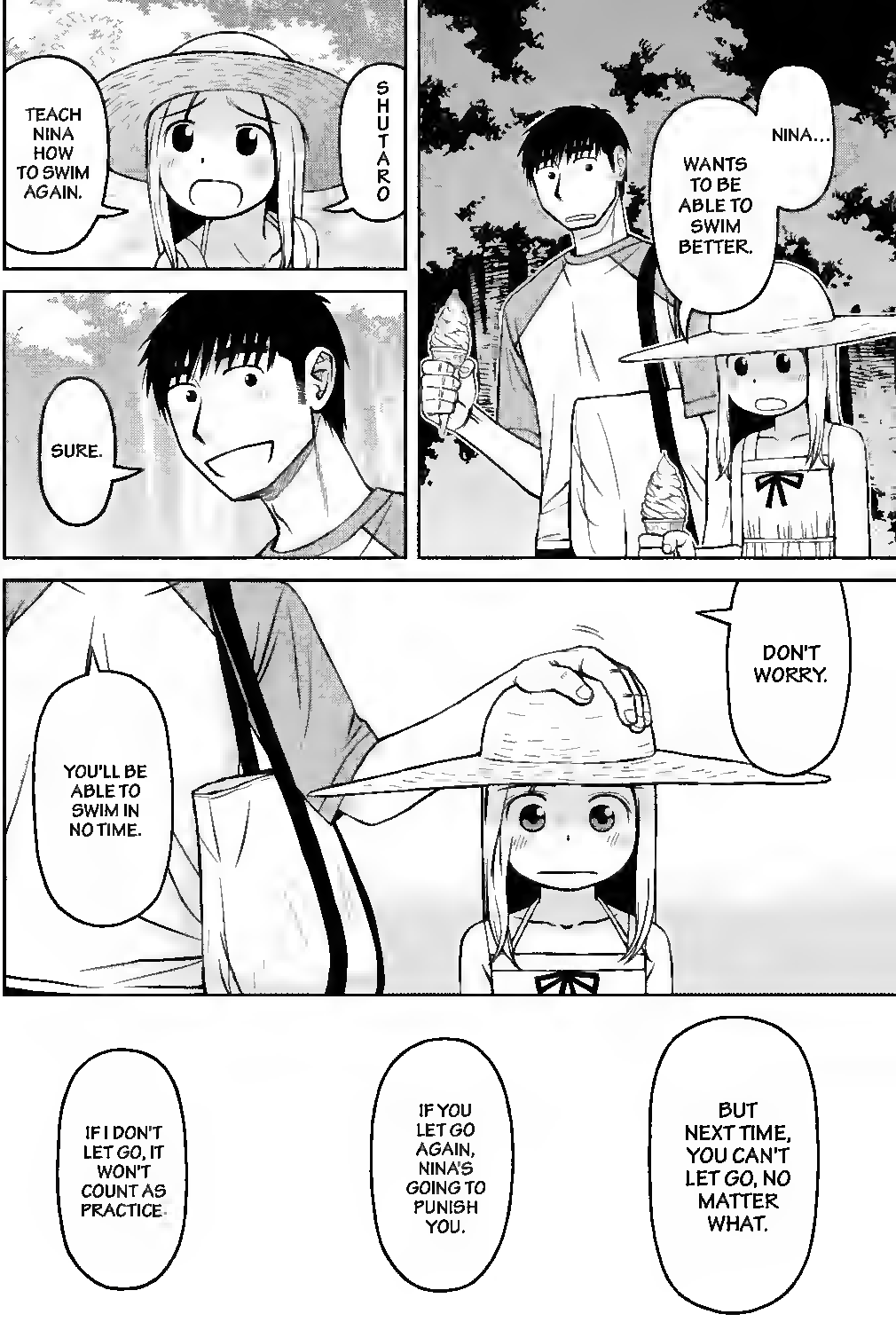
YOU'RE SO CLOSE TO BEING ABLE TO SWIM.
WHY DID YOU START SINKING...
WHEN I LET GO?


SQUEEZE
ぎゅっ

WELL...
NINA WAS REALLY SCARED!

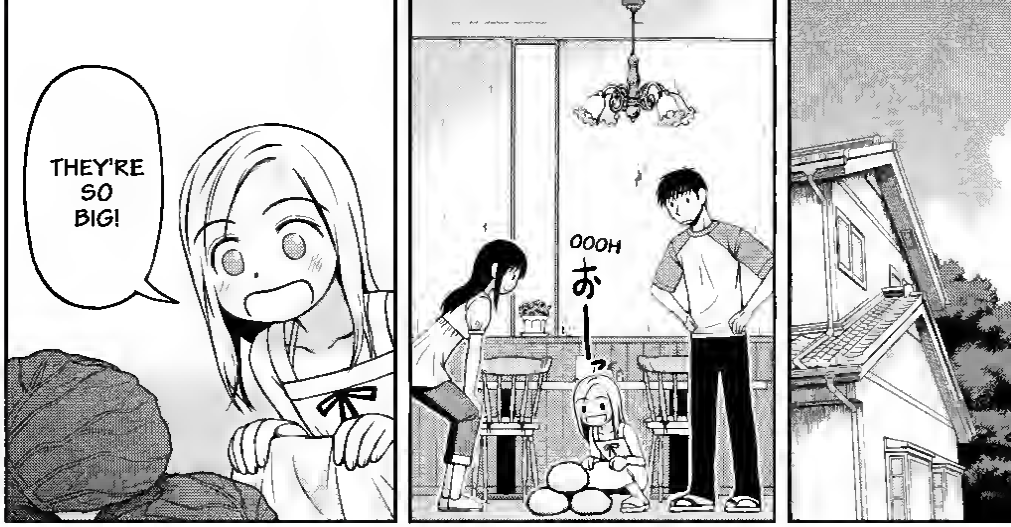
HEY, YOU DON'T HAVE TO HOLD ON SO TIGHTLY...

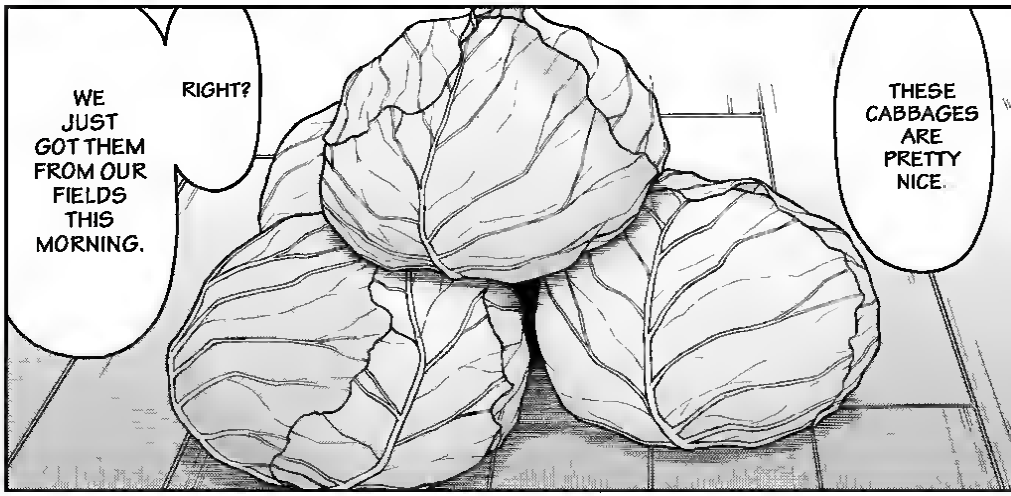

I SEE.
...
I'M SORRY...
HM?
HEY, SHUTARO.


SHUTARO
TEACH NINA HOW TO SWIM AGAIN.
NINA...
WANTS TO BE ABLE TO SWIM BETTER.
SURE.
DON'T WORRY.
YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SWIM IN NO TIME.
IF I DON'T LET GO, IT WON'T COUNT AS PRACTICE.
IF YOU LET GO AGAIN, NINA'S GOING TO PUNISH YOU.
BUT NEXT TIME, YOU CAN'T LET GO, NO MATTER WHAT.

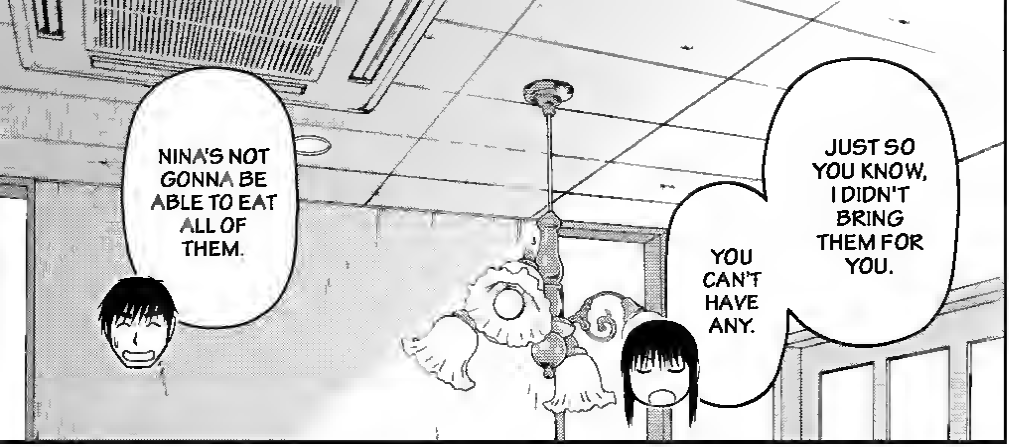
CHAPTER 13

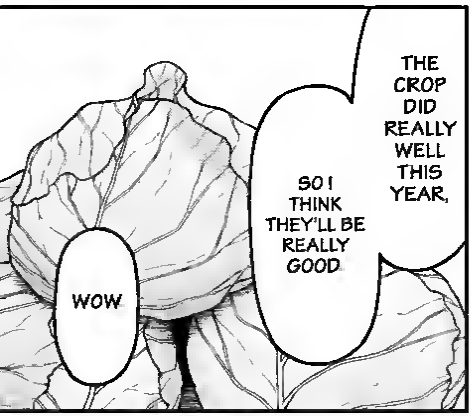
I TRIED
TO MAKE IT

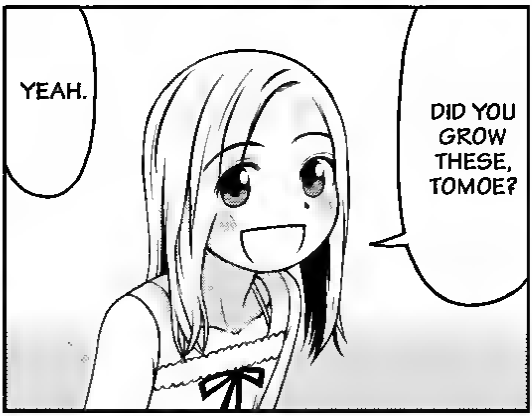

THEY'RE SO BIG!
OOOH
おー


WE JUST GOT THEM FROM OUR FIELDS THIS MORNING.
RIGHT?
THESE CABBAGES ARE PRETTY NICE.

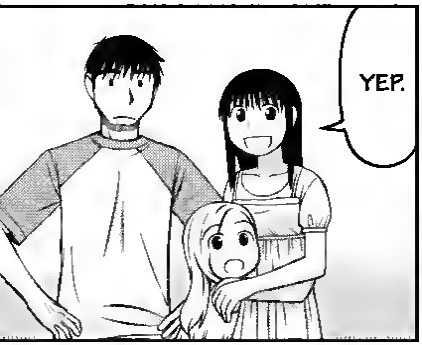
THANKS, TOMOE.
GR
I WANTED NINA-CHAN TO HAVE SOME SO I BROUGHT THEM OVER.
REALLY?

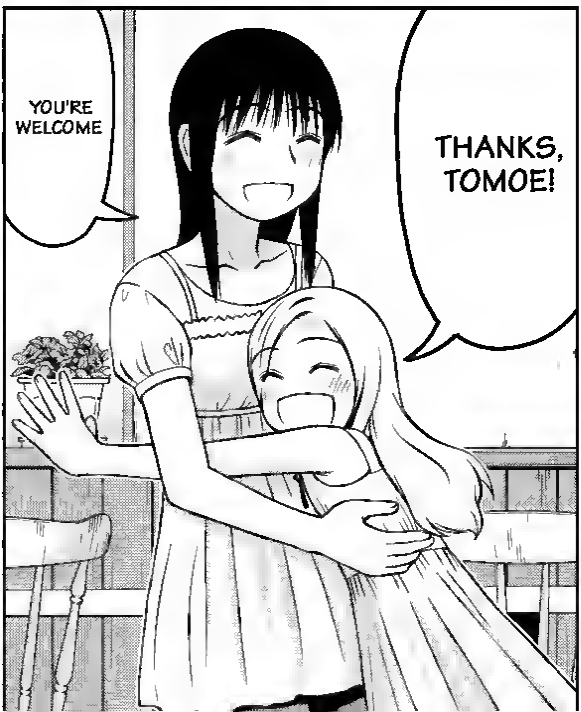

NINA'S NOT GONNA BE ABLE TO EAT ALL OF THEM.
YOU CAN'T HAVE ANY.
JUST SO YOU KNOW, I DIDN'T BRING THEM FOR YOU.


WOW
SO I THINK THEY'LL BE REALLY GOOD.
THE CROP DID REALLY WELL THIS YEAR.


YEAH.
DID YOU GROW THESE, TOMOE?

COULD YOU START YOUR SHIFT SOON?
TOMOE-CHAN,

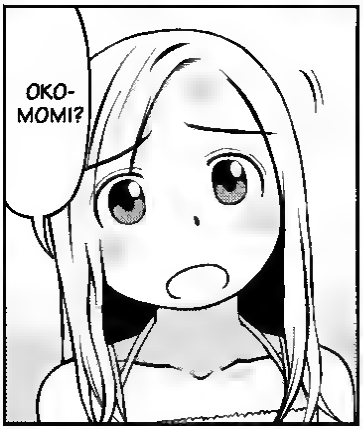

YEP.

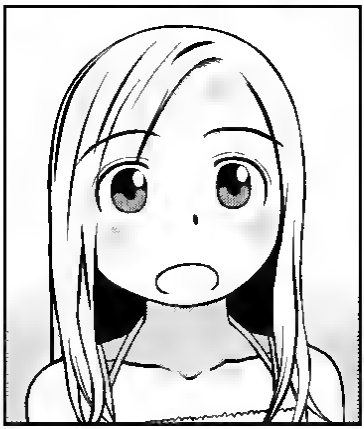

YOU'RE WELCOME
THANKS, TOMOE!

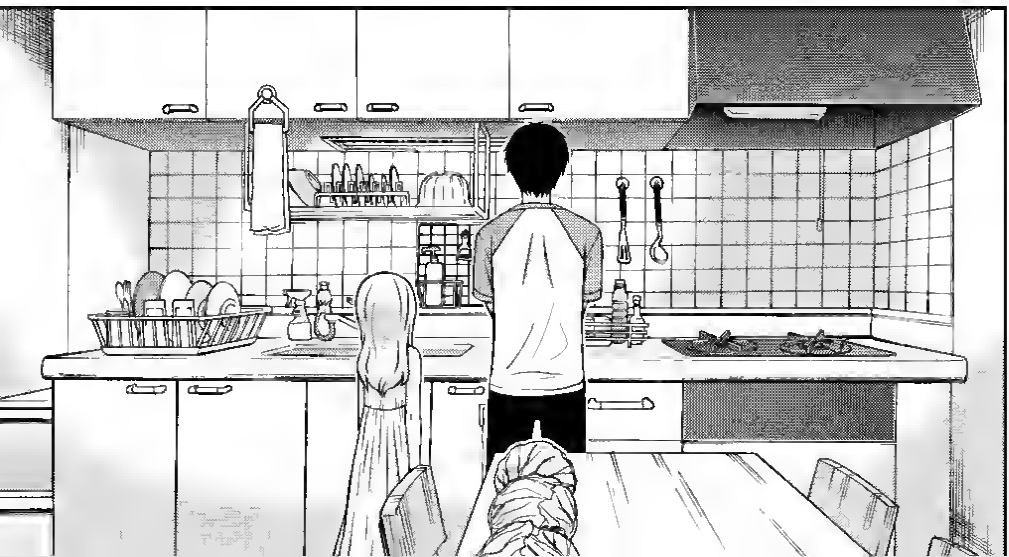
SHU, WHY DON'T YOU MAKE SOME CABBAGE ROLLS FOR NINA-CHAN TONIGHT?
LIKE IT'S THAT EASY
DO YOUR BEST AT WORK TOMOE!
人生工
お仕事がんばって
HEY, SHUTARO.
HM?
MAKE LUNCH WITH TOMOE'S CABBAGES.
WHAT?
YOU WANT TO EAT THEM ALREADY?
YEAH
...
LET'S SEE...

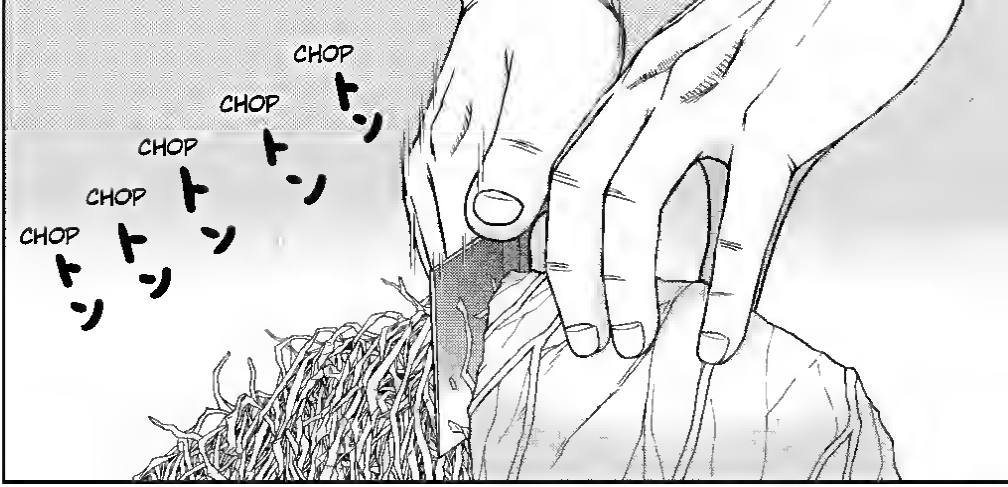
I'LL MAKE YOU MY SPECIAL OKONOMIYAKI THEN.
ALL RIGHT.

NOT "OKO-MOMI."
OKONOMI
WHAT'S THAT? 何それ?


OKO-MOMI?



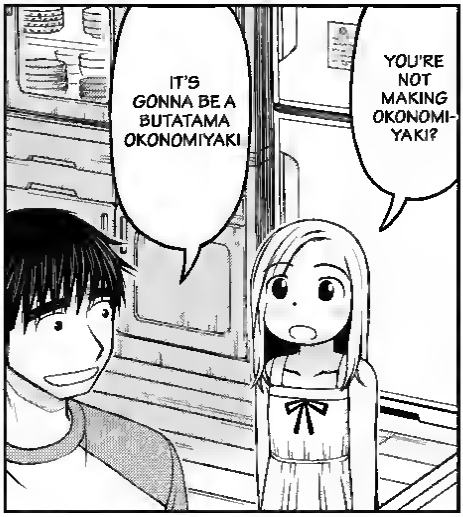


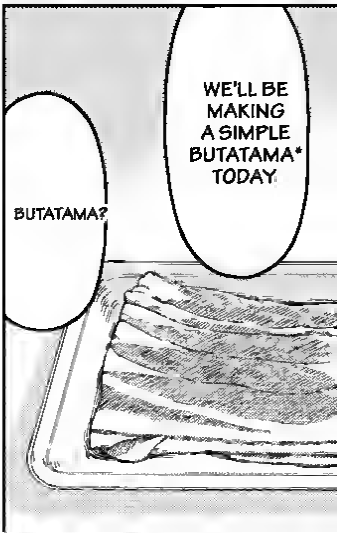

CHOP
トン
CHOP
トン
CHOP
トン
CHOP
トン
CHOP
トン

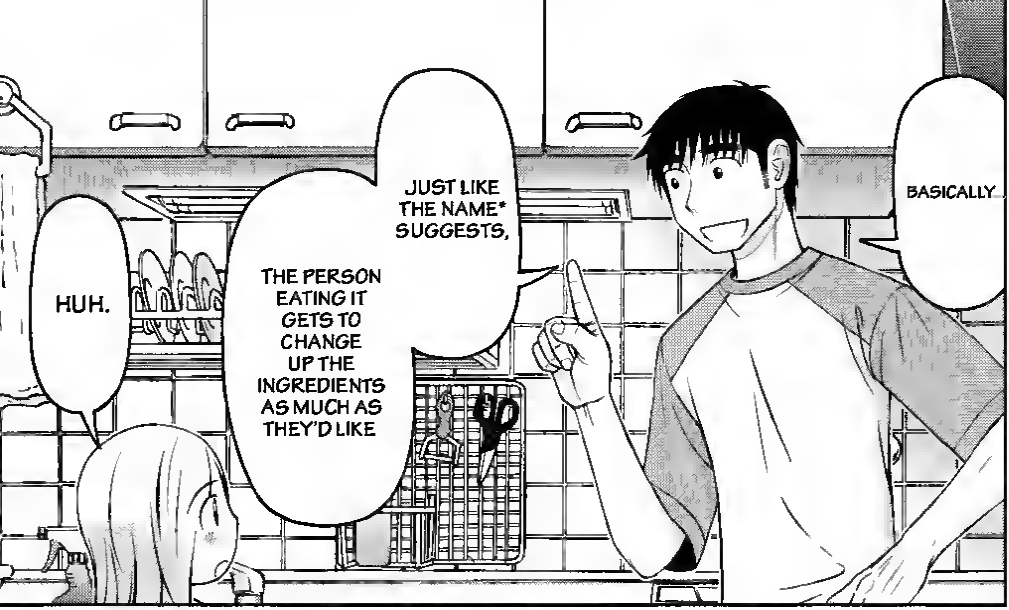
SHUTARO, YOU'RE SO GOOD AT THIS!
HAHA.
I CAN AT LEAST CHOP CABBAGE.
CHOP
トン
CHOP
トン
CHOP
トン
CHOP
トン

* PORK AND EGG

?

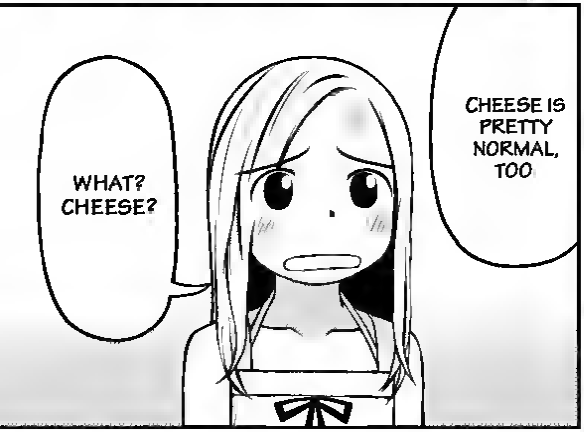

IT'S GONNA BE A BUTATAMA OKONOMIYAKI
YOU'RE NOT MAKING OKONOMI-YAKI?

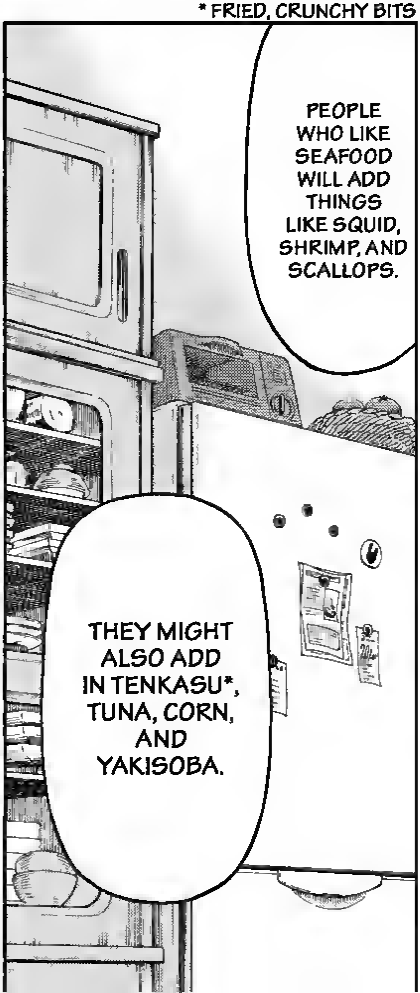

WE'LL BE MAKING A SIMPLE BUTATAMA* TODAY.
BUTATAMA?



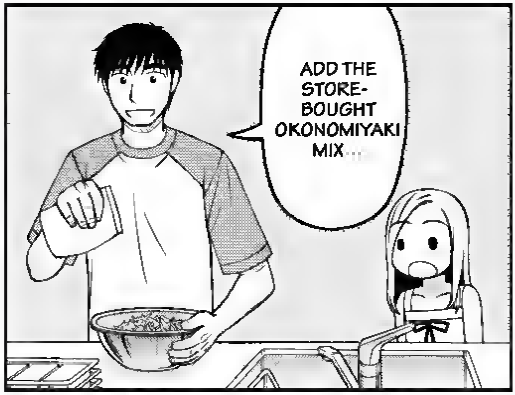
* OKONOMIYAKI LITERALLY MEANS "COOK WHAT YOU'D LIKE."

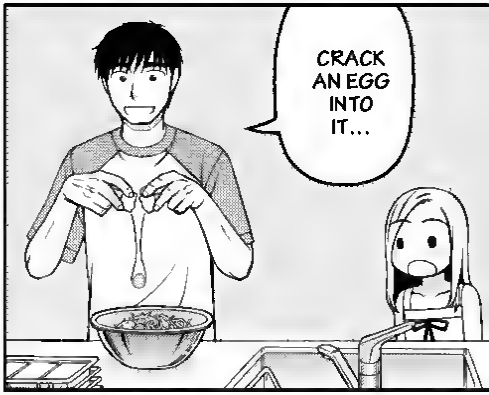
* FRIED, CRUNCHY BITS



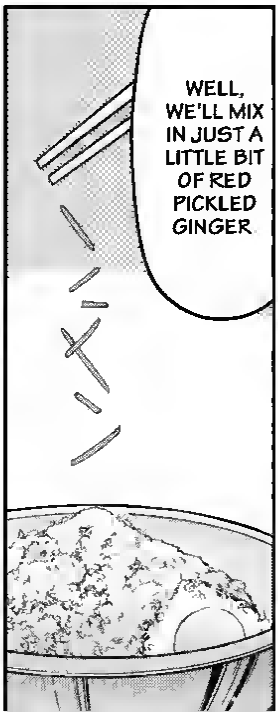

PEOPLE WHO LIKE SEAFOOD WILL ADD THINGS LIKE SQUID, SHRIMP, AND SCALLOPS.
THEY MIGHT ALSO ADD IN TENKASU*, TUNA, CORN, AND YAKISOBA.

FIRST, WE PUT THE CABBAGE WE CUT UP EARLIER INTO A BOWL...


ADD THE STORE-BOUGHT OKONOMIYAKI MIX...

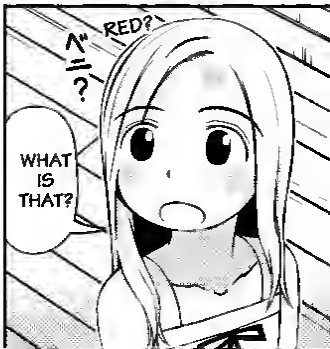

CRACK AN EGG INTO IT...

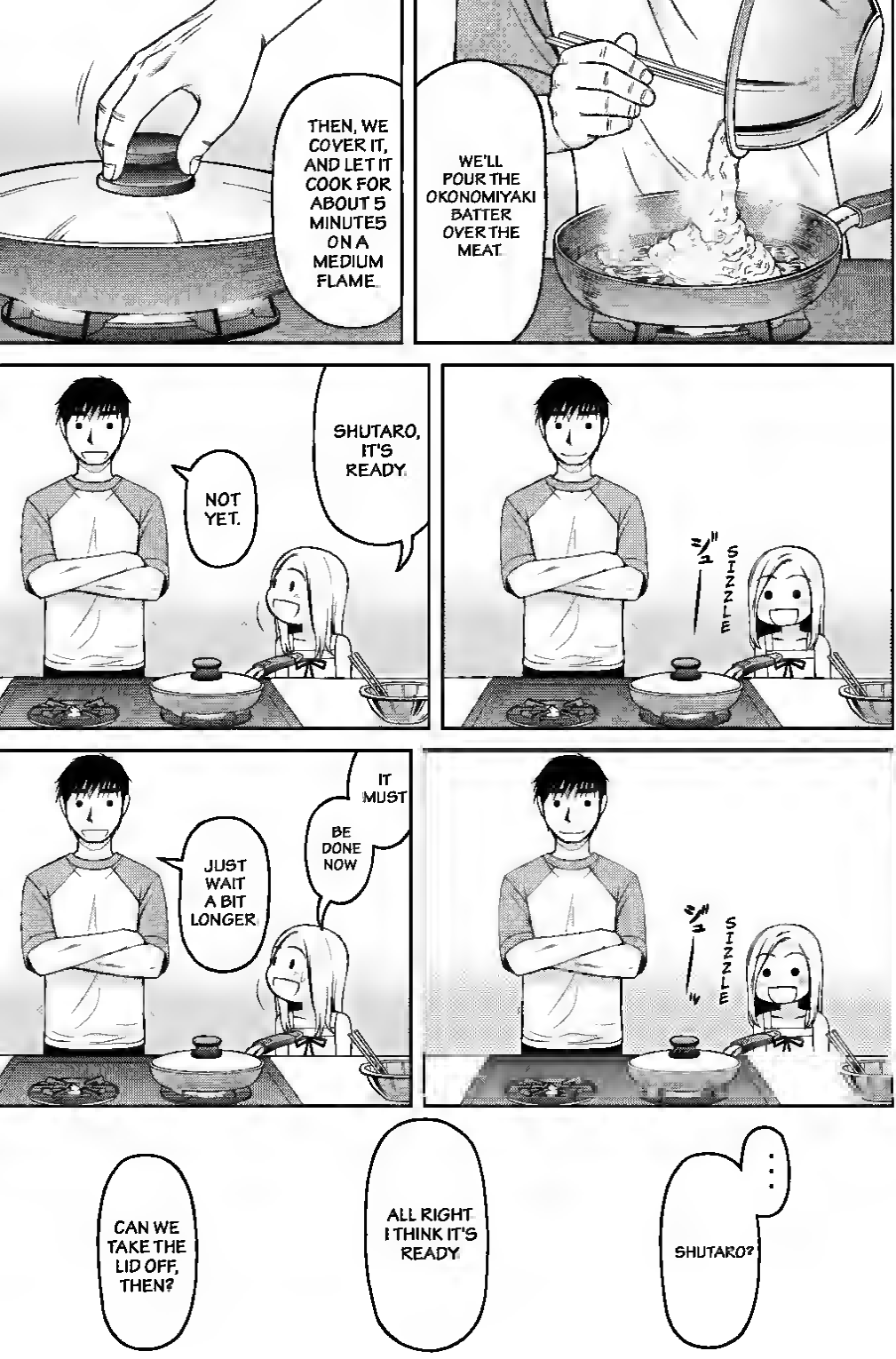
NOW, WE PUT A BIT OF VEGETABLE OIL INTO THE FRYING PAN...

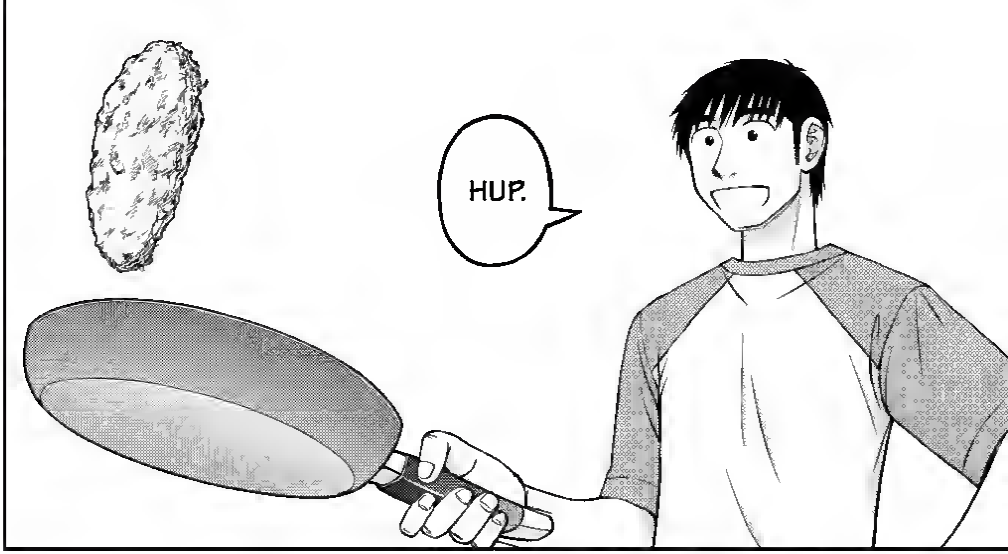

WELL, WE'LL MIX IN JUST A LITTLE BIT OF RED PICKLED GINGER.

NINA,
CAN YOU EAT RED PICKLED GINGER?

SIZZLE
ONCE THE PORK'S COOKED FOR A BIT...


RED?
WHAT IS THAT?


THEN, WE COVER IT, AND LET IT COOK FOR ABOUT 5 MINUTES ON A MEDIUM FLAME.
WE'LL POUR THE OKONOMIYAKI BATTER OVER THE MEAT.
SHUTARO, IT'S READY.
NOT YET.
ジュ"
SIZZLE
IT MUST BE DONE NOW
JUST WAIT A BIT LONGER.
ジュ
SIZZLE
CAN WE TAKE THE LID OFF, THEN?
ALL RIGHT. I THINK IT'S READY.
...
SHUTARO?

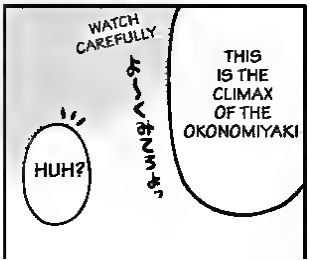

HUP.

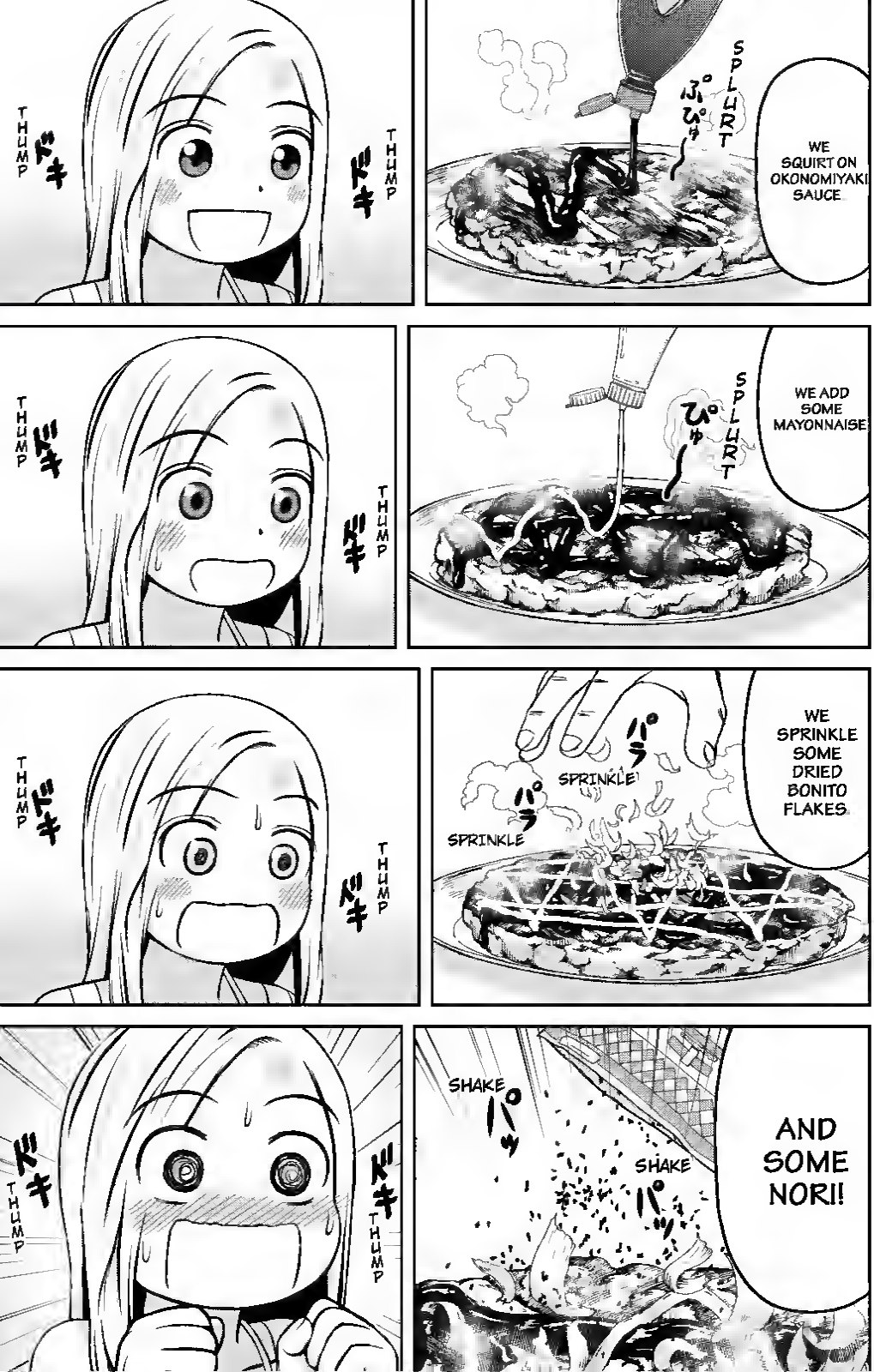
SLIDE
ペタン

NOT YET.
LET'S HURRY AND EAT.

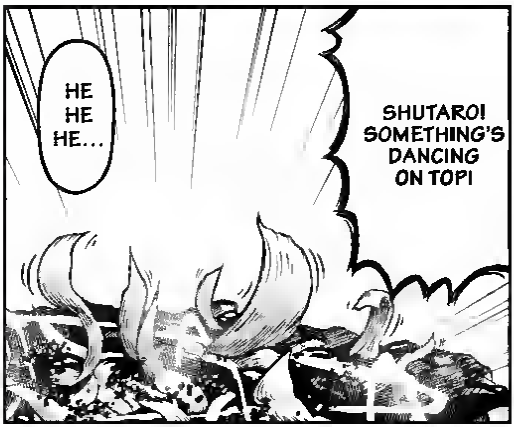
NEXT, WE COOK IT FOR ABOUT 2 MINUTES, UNCOVERED.
AND NOW... IT'S DONE.

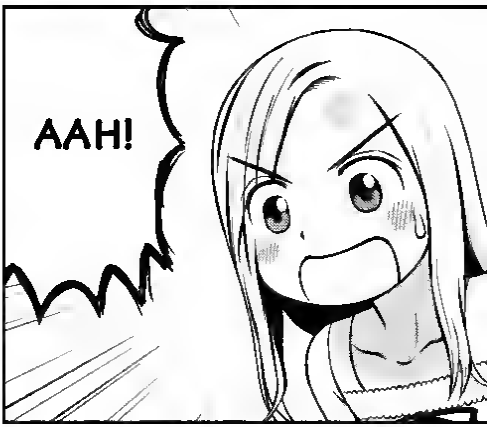
IT'S NOT THAT COOL...
YOU'RE AMAZING, SHUTARO!
パチパチパチパチ
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP


WATCH CAREFULLY
よーくみてろよ。
THIS IS THE CLIMAX OF THE OKONOMIYAKI
HUH?

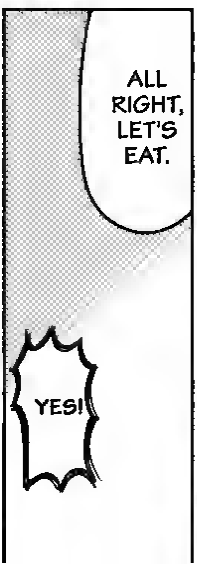

THUMP
ドキ
THUMP
ドキ
SPLURT
ぴゅっ
WE SQUIRT ON OKONOMIYAKI SAUCE
THUMP
ドキ
THUMP
ドキ
SPLURT
ぴゅ
WE ADD SOME MAYONNAISE
THUMP
ドキ
THUMP
ドキ
SPRINKLE
パラ
SPRINKLE
パラ
WE SPRINKLE SOME DRIED BONITO FLAKES
ドキ
THUMP
ドキ
THUMP
SHAKE
パッ
SHAKE
パッ
AND SOME NORI!

AND NOW SHUTARO'S SPECIAL OKONOMIYAKI IS COMPLETE.
OOOH!


SHUTARO! SOMETHING'S DANCING ON TOP!
HE HE HE...


AAH!

THANK YOU FOR THE FOOD

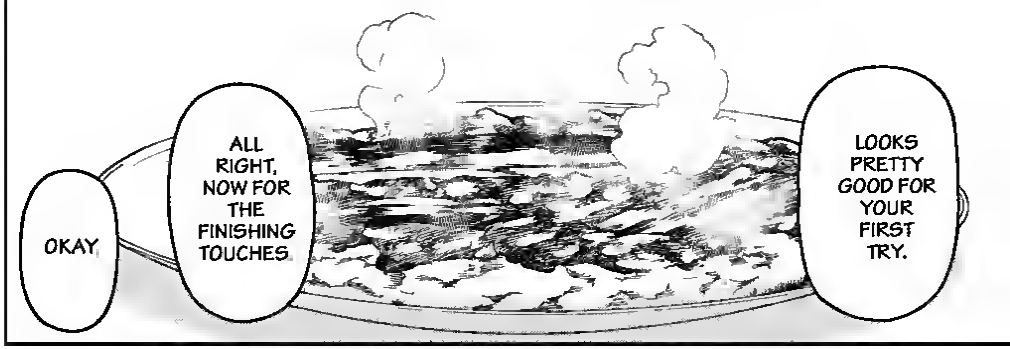

ALL RIGHT, LET'S EAT.
YES!

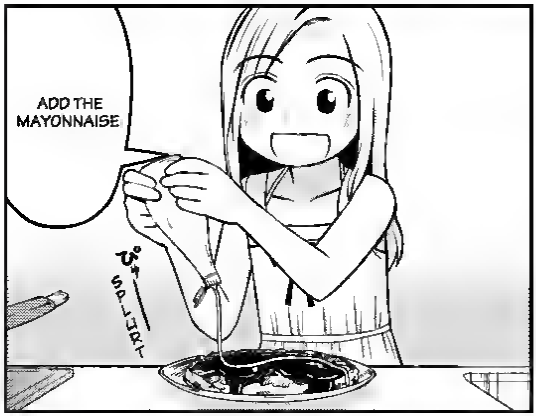
THIS IS PROOF THAT IT WILL BE DELICIOUS
SHUTARO, YOU'RE AMAZING!

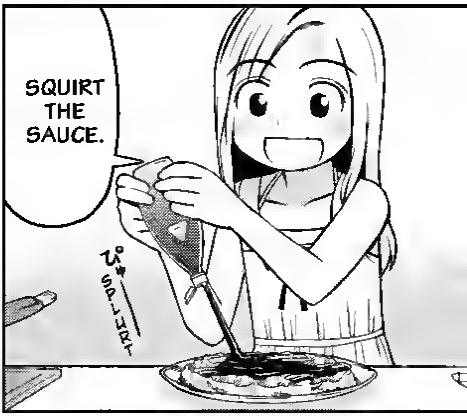
CHEW もぐ
CHEW もぐ
AAH あ
IT'S SO GOOD!
MY TURN...
CHEW もぐ
CHEW もぐ
OOH..
TOMOE WAS RIGHT THE CABBAGE IS DELICIOUS

ONE'S NOT GONNA BE ENOUGH.
I'LL MAKE MORE.
YUP.
YEAH, ISN'T IT GOOO?
IS THIS WHAT TOMOE'S CABBAGE TASTES LIKE?
HUH?
NINA WILL MAKE ONE NEXT.
SHUTARO.
WELL, OKONOMIYAKI IS EASY.
ALL RIGHT, NINA, YOU WANNA TRY?
YEAH.
HAVE YOU COOKED BEFORE?
NOPE!
BUT NINA WANTS TO

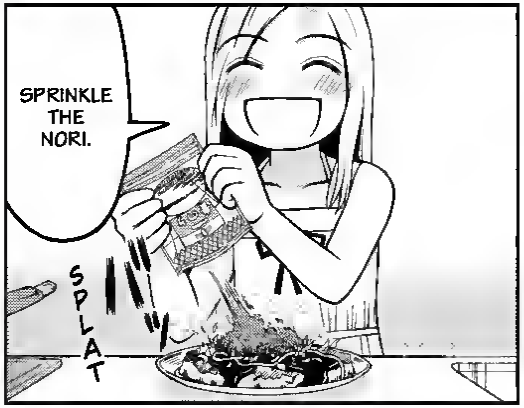
STIR
STIR
GOOD MAKE SURE YOU HOLD THE BOWL.
THIS IS SORTA SCARY
なんか こえぇ…
SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE
USE THESE TO FLIP IT OVER.
OKAY.
GENTLY, NOW. GENTLY.
SIZZLE
SLIDE
DID IT!
OOH
HUP!
FLIP

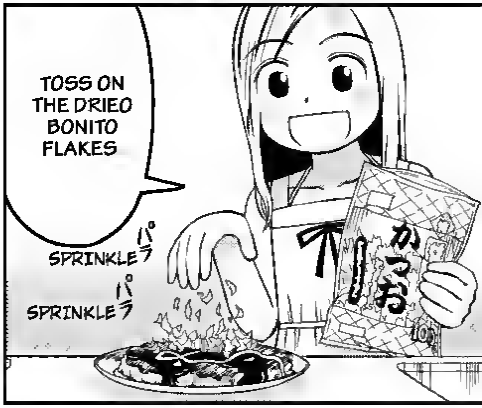


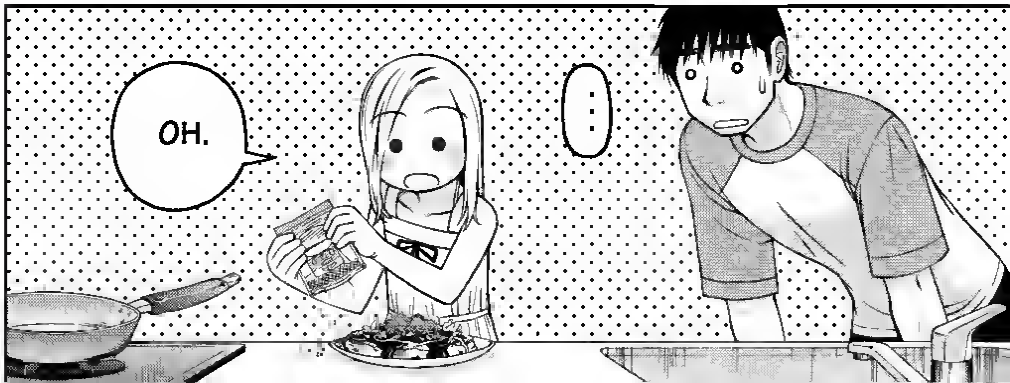




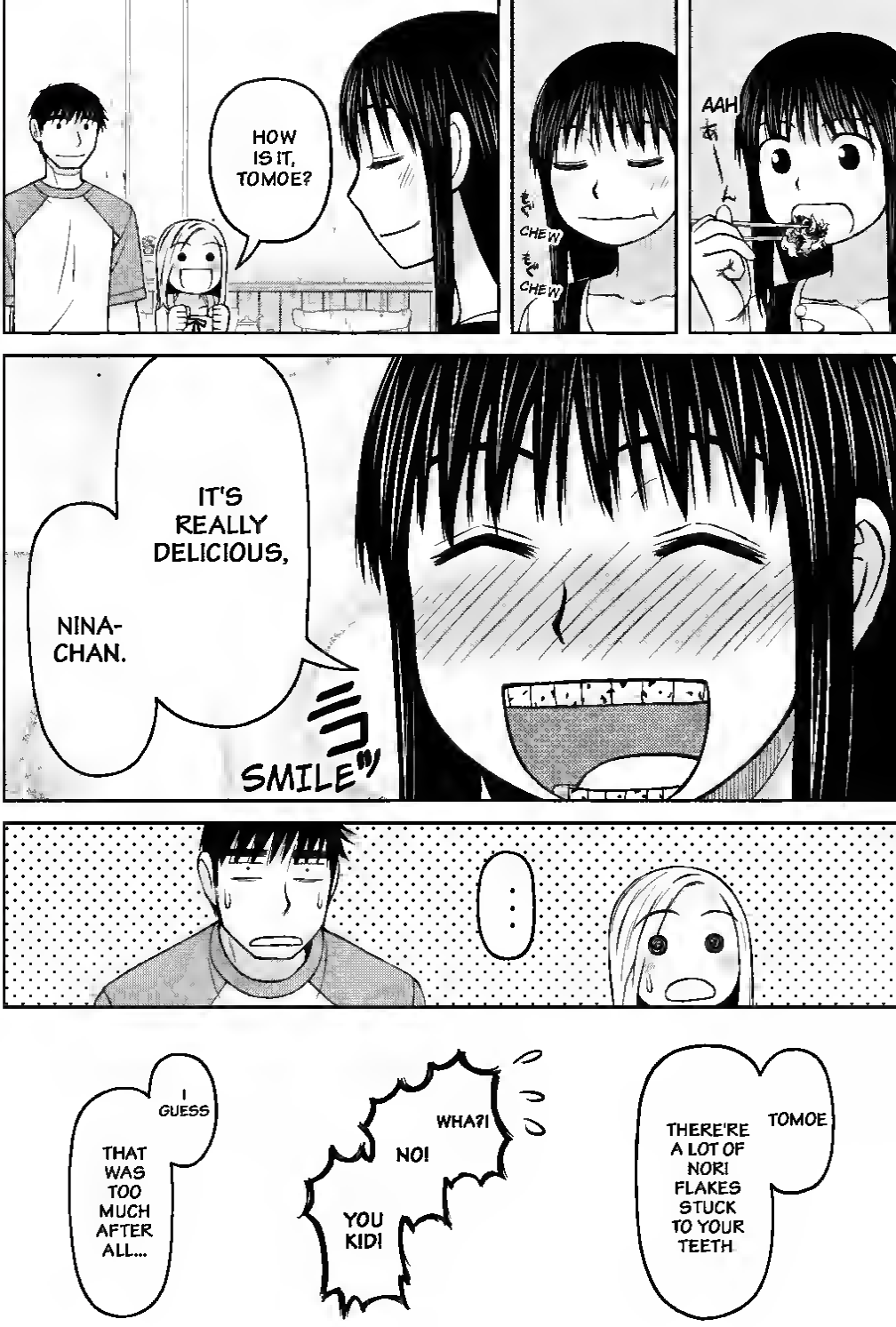
SIGN DRIED BONITO FLAKES





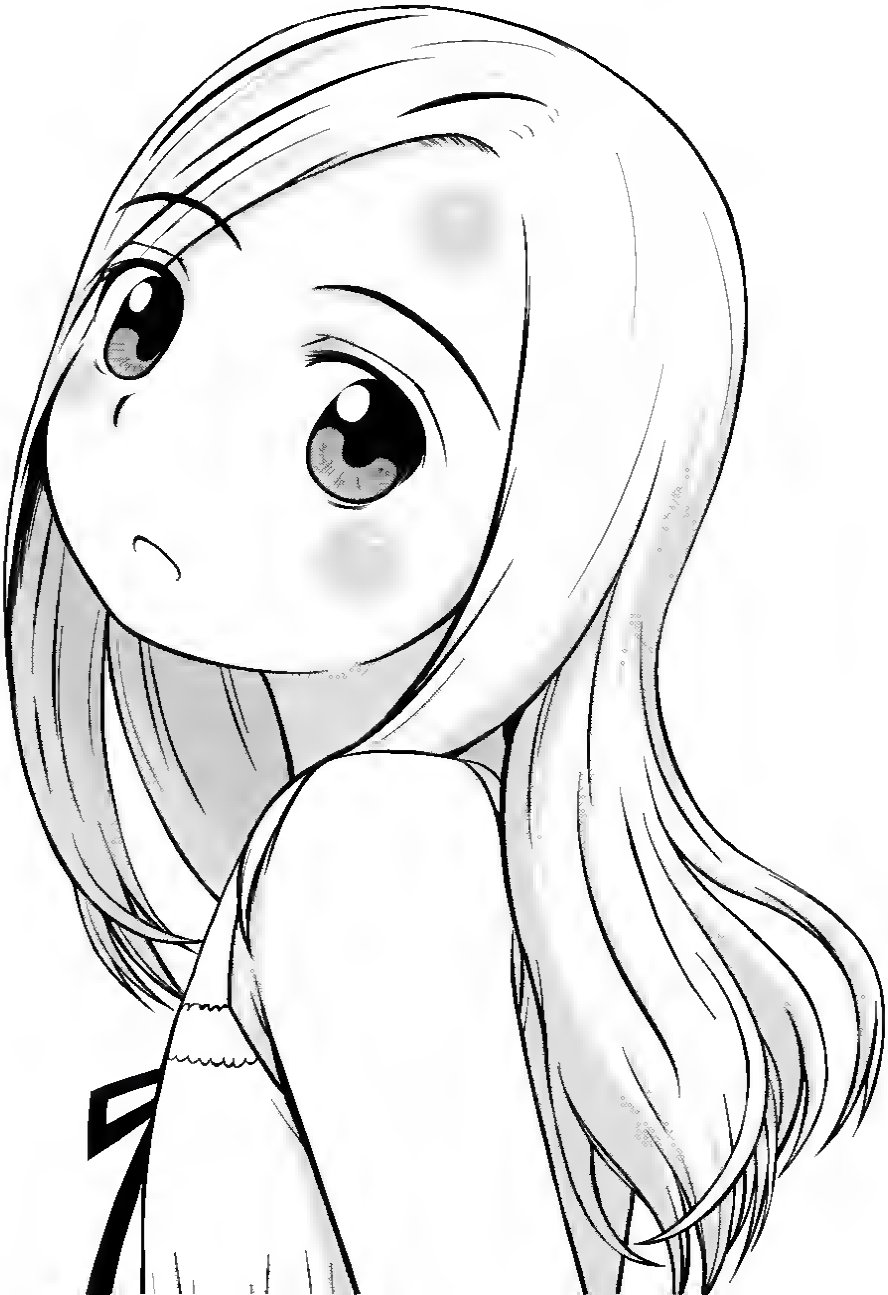


NOPE!
ALL RIGHT, LET'S EAT!
SHUTARO, THIS ..
IT'S FINE! IT'S FINE!
YOU CAN NEVER HAVE TOO MUCH NORI.
REALLY?
?
THIS ONE ISN'T FOR US.
NINA MADE IT JUST FOR YOU, TOMOE.
YEAH.
FOR ME?
ENJOY IT.
I WILL.
REALLY?
IT'S NINA'S FIRST TIME COOKING.


HOW IS IT, TOMOE?
CHEW
CHEW
AAH
IT'S REALLY DELICIOUS, NINA-CHAN.
SMILE
...
I GUESS THAT WAS TOO MUCH AFTER ALL...
WHA?!
NO!
YOU KID!
TOMOE THERE'RE A LOT OF NORI FLAKES STUCK TO YOUR TEETH

CHAPTER 14

ONE STEP FORWARD

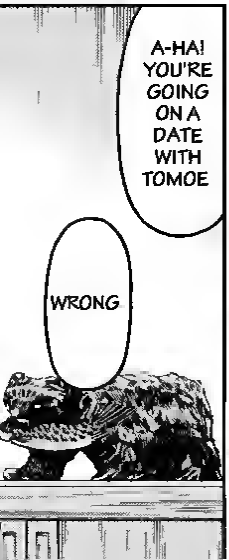


HM?
WHAT ARE YOU WEARING?
SHUTARO
HMM...
DO THESE CLOTHES LOOK GOOD?
WHAT DO YOU THINK, NINA?

WHAT?!
THEY'RE WEIRD.

AND YOU DON'T HAVE ANY FACIAL HAIR
WELL, I SHAVED
HAHA
はは…

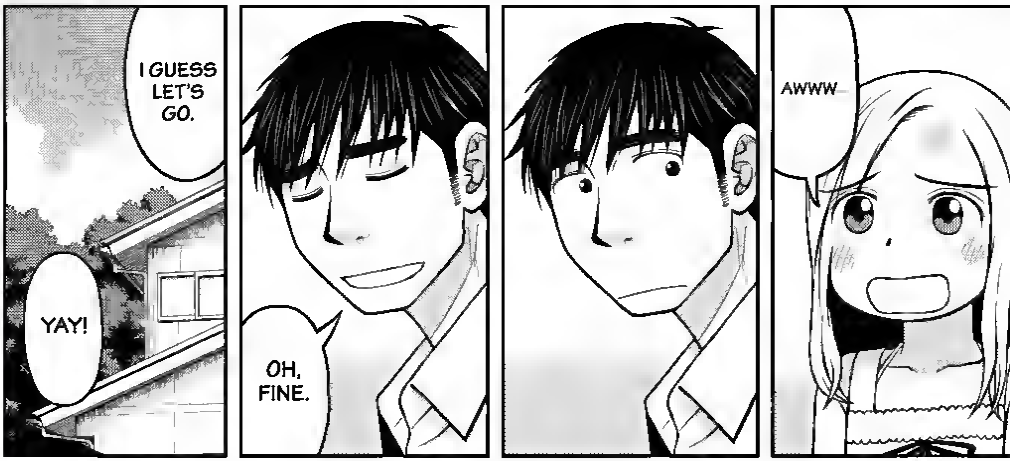
THEY'RE NOT WEIRD.

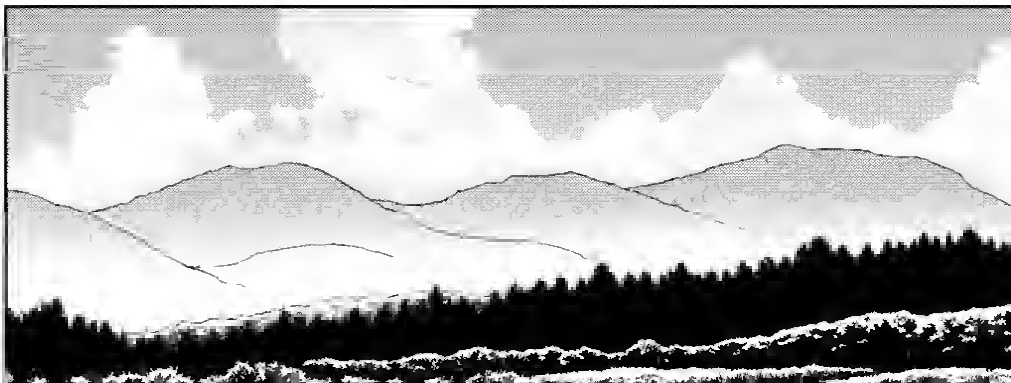

A-HA! YOU'RE GOING ON A DATE WITH TOMOE
WRONG

YEAH.
ARE YOU GOING OUT?

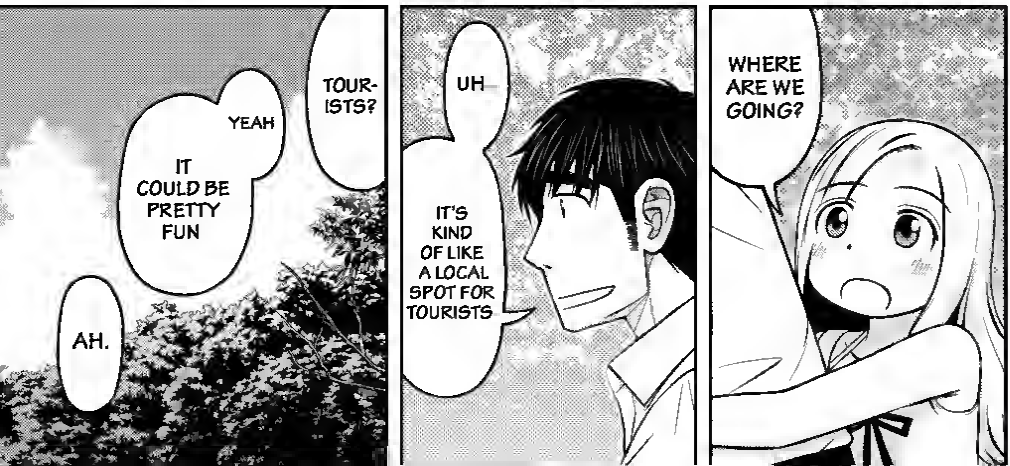
YOU DON'T SEEM LIKE YOURSELF.

I'M NOT GOING OUT TO PLAY.
STAY HOME, NINA.
NINA WANTS TO GO, TOO.


I GUESS LET'S GO.
YAY!
OH, FINE.
AWWW

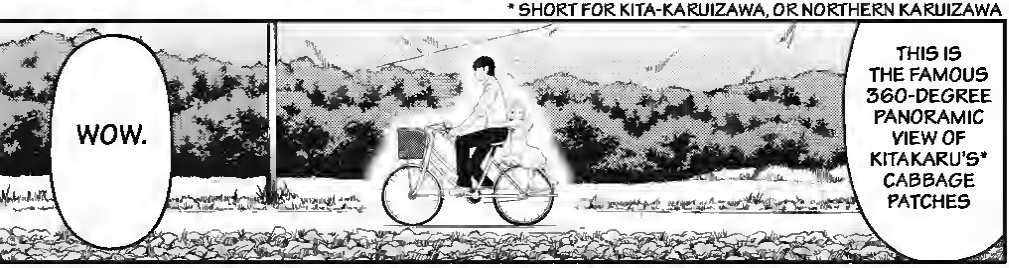


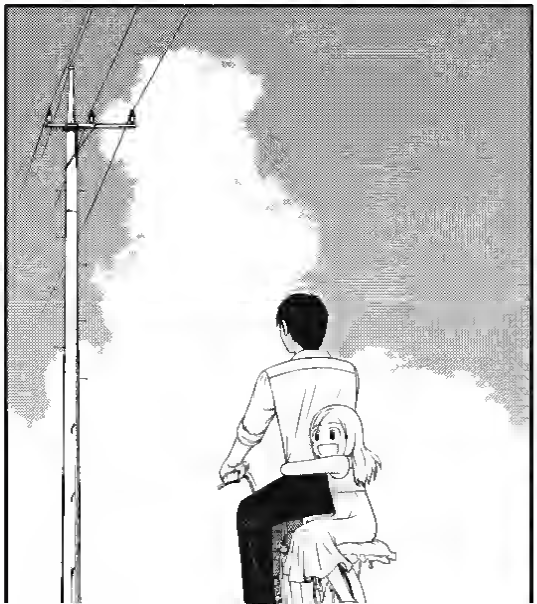
NINA, DOESN'T YOUR BUTT HURT?
NAH, THE CUSHION YOU GAVE NINA IS FINE
GOOD.

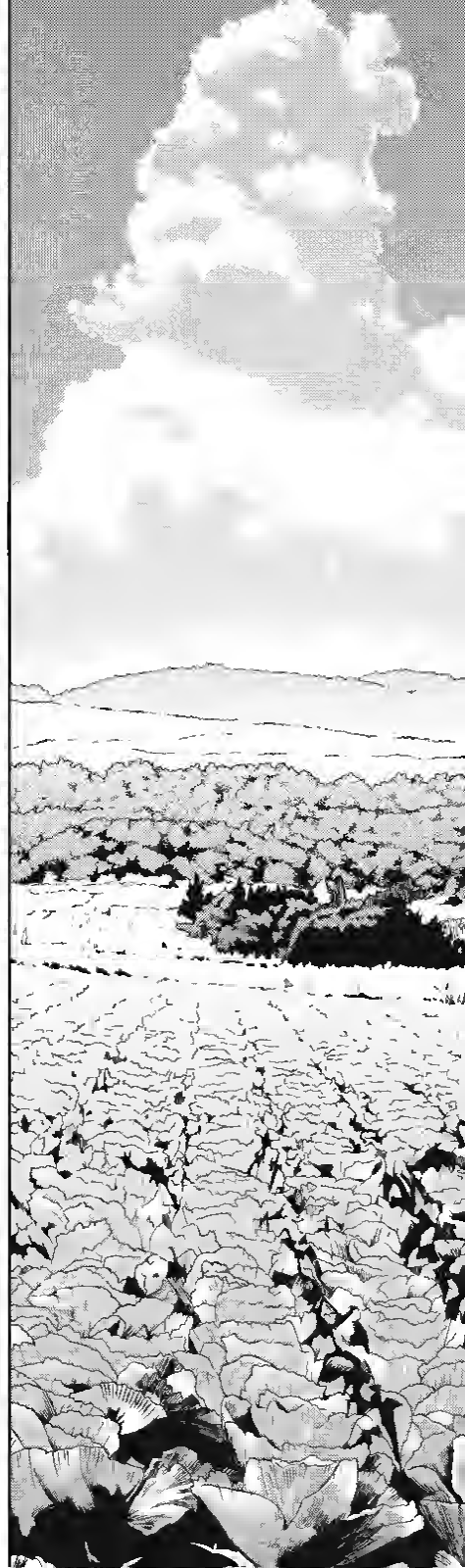

WHERE ARE WE GOING?
UH—
IT'S KIND OF LIKE A LOCAL SPOT FOR TOURISTS
TOUR-ISTS?
YEAH
IT COULD BE PRETTY FUN
AH.

ISN'T IT?
THAT'S AMAZING!

* SHORT FOR KITA-KARUIZAWA, OR NORTHERN KARUIZAWA

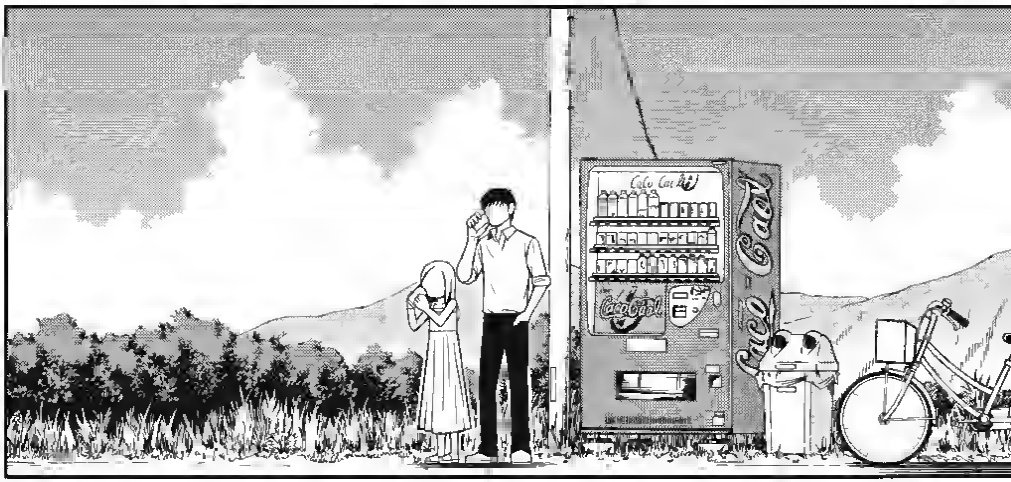


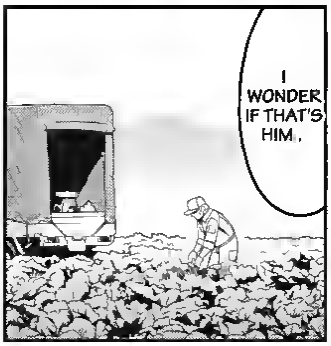




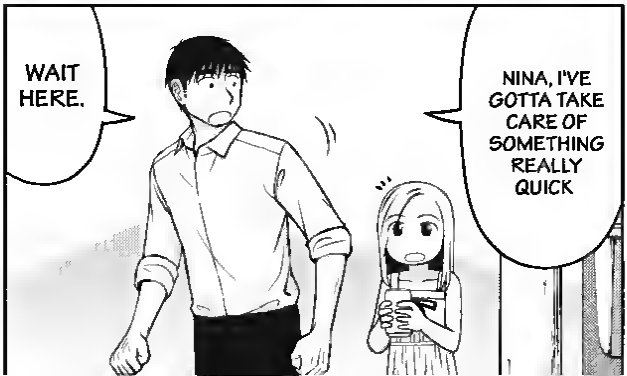
BUT ON SECOND THOUGHT, IT'S A PRETTY FANTASTIC VIEW.
THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE HERE MIGHT BE USED TO THIS...
キャ
EEK!
SHINK
シャン
SHINK
シャン
SHINK
シャン
SHINK
シャン

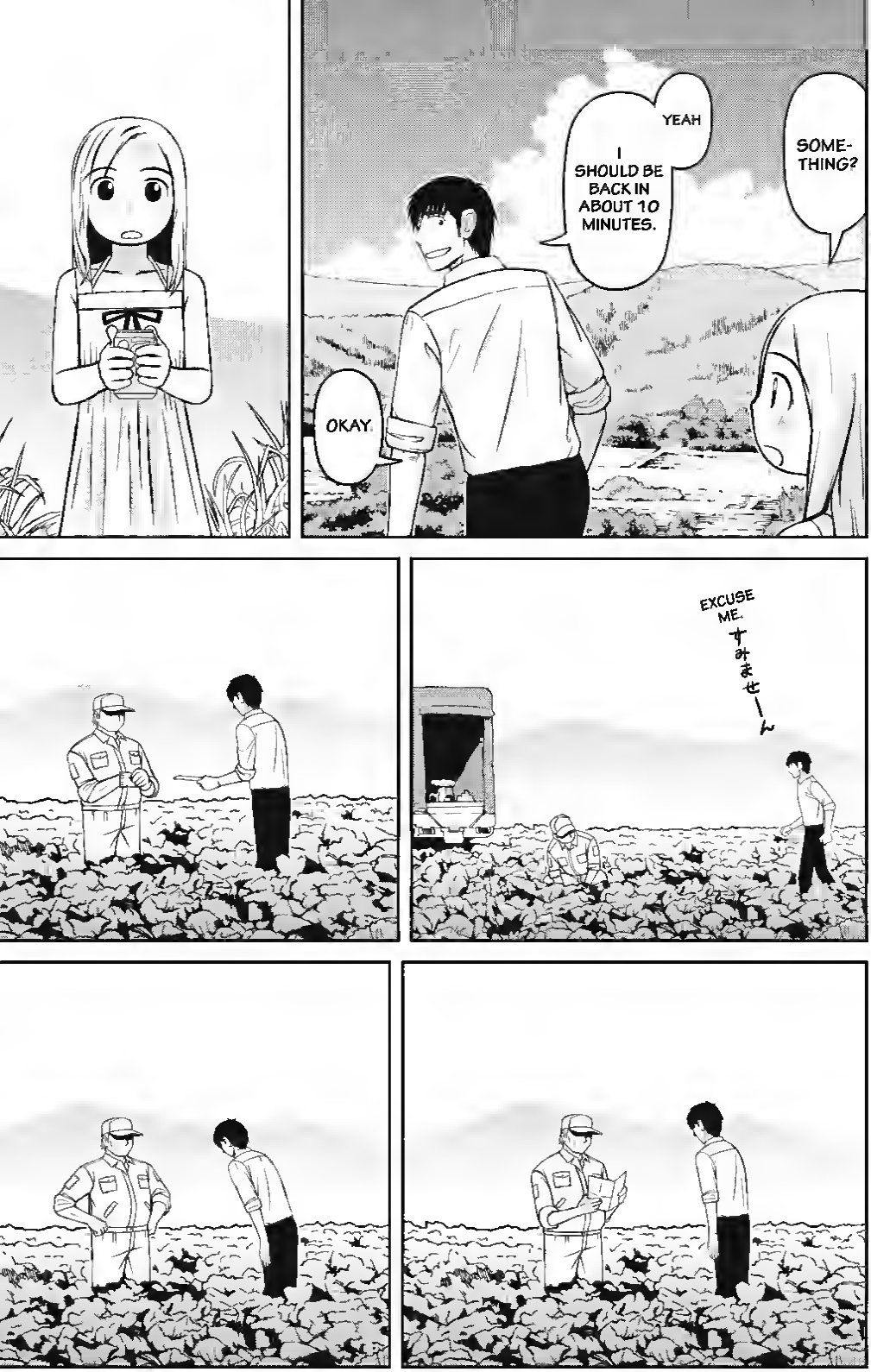
NINA,
LET'S STOP HERE FOR A BIT
OKAY.

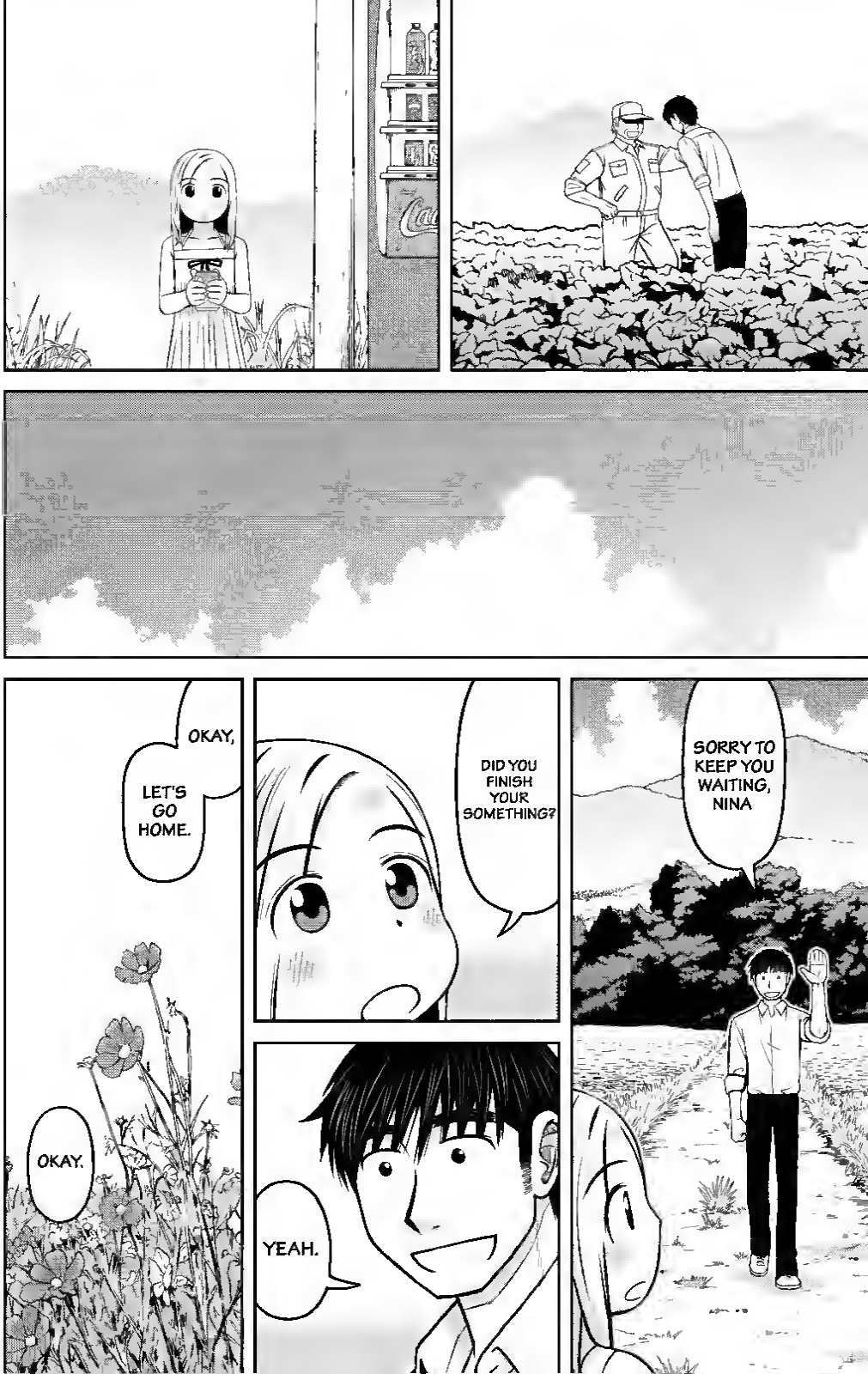

Coca-Cola


I WONDER IF THAT'S HIM.

COLD AND DELICIOUS
つめたくておいしー


WAIT HERE.
NINA, I'VE GOTTA TAKE CARE OF SOMETHING REALLY QUICK


YEAH
I SHOULD BE BACK IN ABOUT 10 MINUTES.
SOME-THING?
OKAY.
EXCUSE ME.
すみませーん

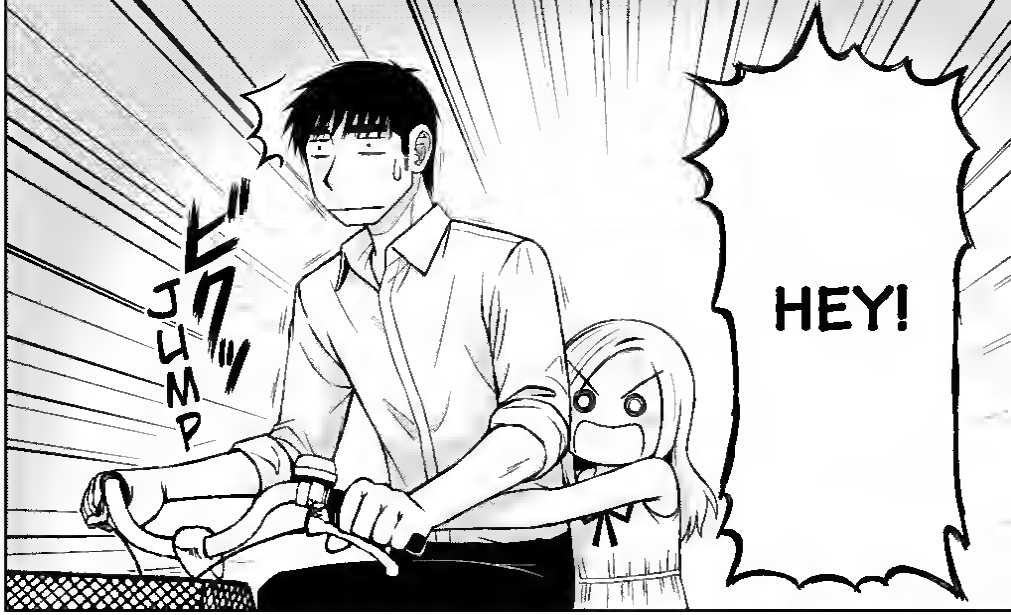

SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING, NINA
DID YOU FINISH YOUR SOMETHING?
YEAH.
OKAY, LET'S GO HOME.
OKAY.

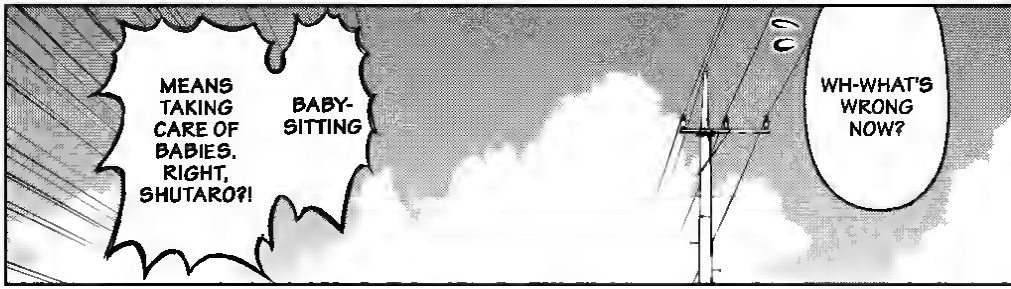
NAH.
DID THAT OLD MAN YELL AT YOU?
HEY, SHUTARO?
HM?
INTER-VIEW?
IT WAS A JOB INTERVIEW
DID NINA SAY THAT?
あれ？ HUH?
YOU ALREADY?! I FORGOT
BUT YOU SAID THAT I SHOULD ALWAYS CHALLENGE MYSELF...
IT'LL BE MY FIRST TIME WORKING IN A FIELD.
STARTING IN SEPTEMBER, I'M GOING TO HELP HARVEST CABBAGE THERE
DOES THAT MEAN YOU'LL BE WORKING?
YEAH

BUT WE'LL BE DONE HARVESTING CABBAGE AT THE END OF OCTOBER AND THAT JOB WILL END...
SO I'M GOING TO TRY TO FIND ANOTHER JOB THEN.
OOH.

SIGN BEWARE OF TRACTORS!

THAT'S WHEN YOU'LL START SCHOOL, TOO...
SO WE'LL BOTH BE BUSY.
THIS GIG STARTS IN SEPTEMBER.
WE'LL HAVE LESS TIME TO SPEND RELAXING TOGETHER...
LIKE THIS.
NINA WANTS TO KEEP PLAYING WITH YOU, SHUTARO
WELL,
I'M GONNA BE BABYSITTING YOU THROUGH AUGUST, SO DON'T WORRY
...


HEY!
ビクッ
JUMP


WH-WHAT'S WRONG NOW?
BABY-SITTING
MEANS TAKING CARE OF BABIES. RIGHT, SHUTARO?!

OH.
TOMOE TOLD ME
YOU'VE BEEN TREATING NINA LIKE A BABY, HAVEN'T YOU?
THAT'S MEAN, SHUTARO
巴のやつ余計なことを…
DANG IT, TOMOE...
IT'S JUST A JOKE. A JOKE.
JEEZ!

SHUTARO, YOU IDIOT! IDIOT!
SMACK
SMACK
HEY! THAT'S DANGER-OUS!

ONCE SEPTEMBER STARTS...

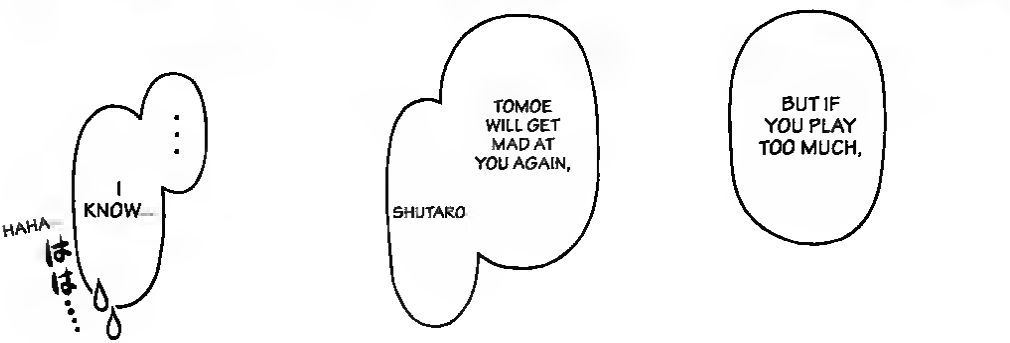
I'M SORRY! I'M SORRY!
I APOLOGIZE.
I'LL BUY YOU SOME ICE CREAM FROM NYŪNYŪTEI SOON, SO FORGIVE ME.
YOU'D BETTER.

AND IF I FIND ANOTHER JOB AFTER THAT...

THINGS MIGHT GET A LITTLE LONELY...

IS SOMETHING WRONG, SHUTARO?
NAH, IT'S NOTHING.

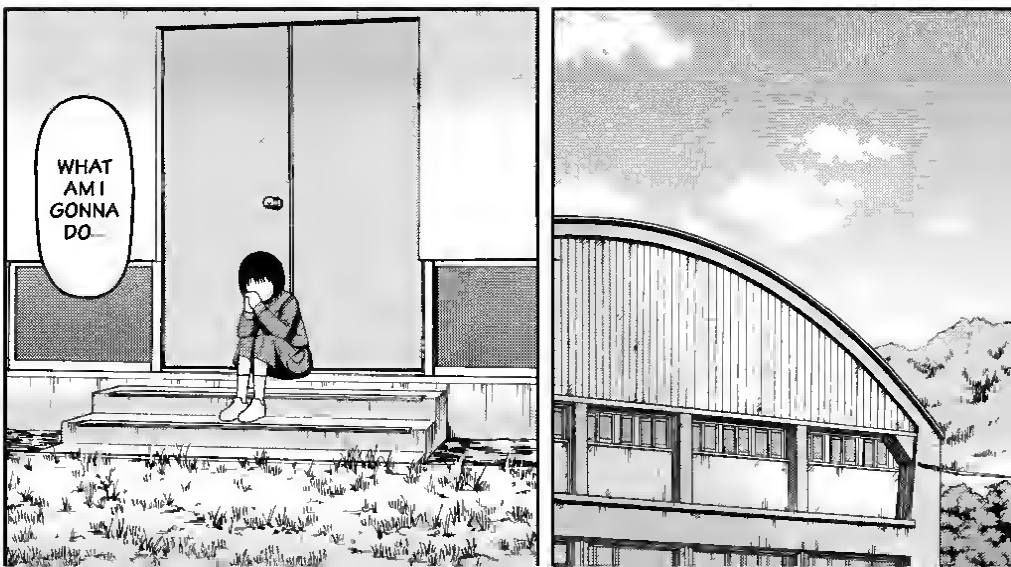
ALL RIGHT!
LET'S PLAY WHILE WE STILL CAN, NINA.
THERE'RE LOTS OF EVENTS COMING UP...
AND THE FIREWORKS FESTIVAL.
OOH.


BUT IF YOU PLAY TOO MUCH,
TOMOE WILL GET MAD AT YOU AGAIN, SHUTARO
...
I KNOW...
HAHA
はは…

CHAPTER 15

THEIR PATTERN

SIGN: KITAKARU JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

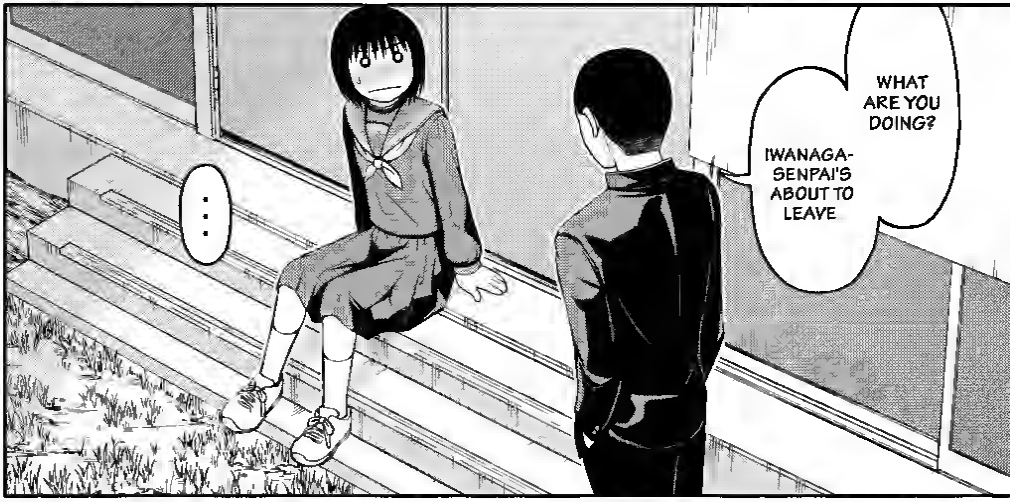


IWANAGA-SENPAI...
IS GOING TO LEAVE..

I HAVE TO TELL HIM HOW I FEEL...

I HAVE TO HURRY...

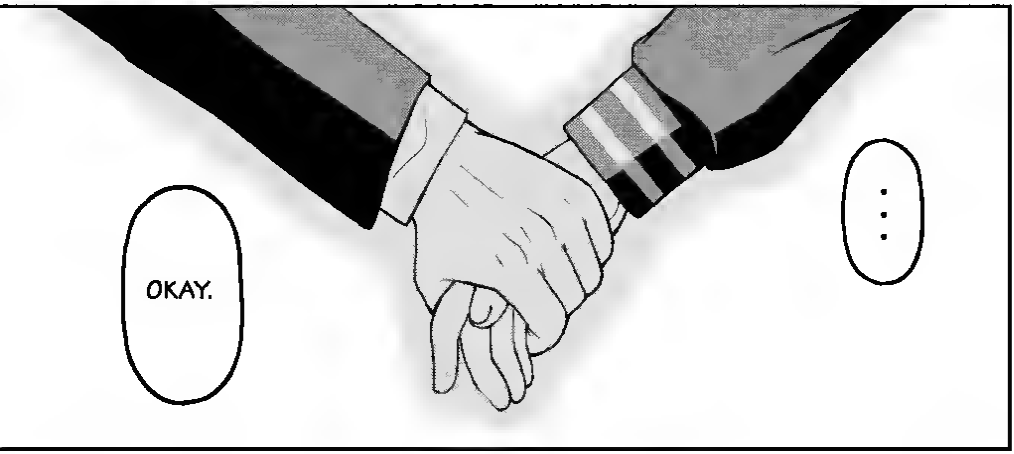
WHAT SHOULD I DO?

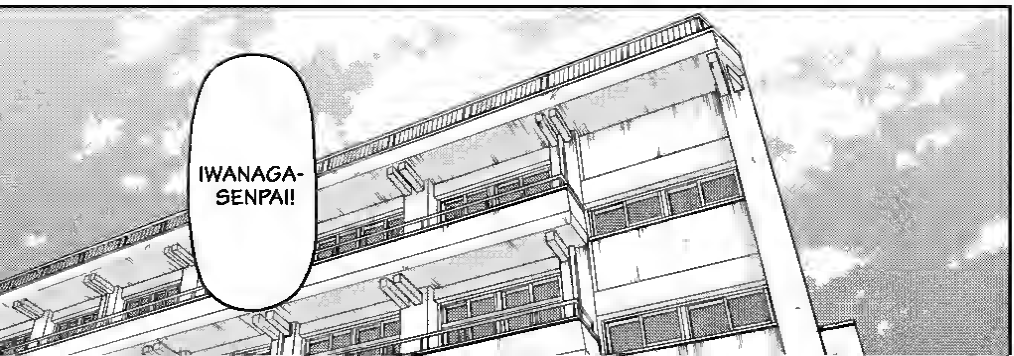


* ON GRADUATION DAY GIRLS WILL SOMETIMES ASK GUYS THEY LIKE TO GIVE THEM THE SECOND BUTTON ON THEIR SCHOOL UNIFORM.

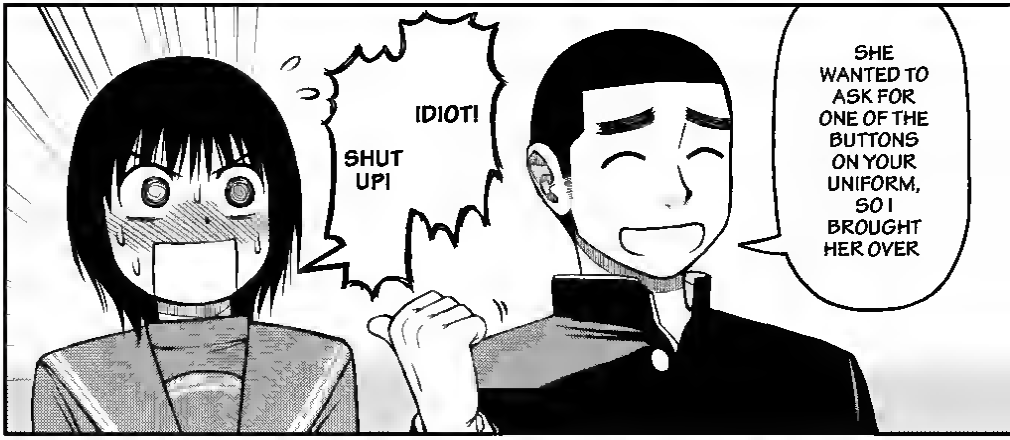
WEREN'T YOU SAYING THAT YOU WERE GOING TO ASK FOR THE SECOND BUTTON ON HIS UNIFORM*?
SHUT UP!
THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU, SHU!
GUESS I HAVE NO CHOICE, THEN...

I'LL GO GET IT FOR YOU.
WHAT?!
ARE YOU STUPID?! THINGS LIKE THIS DON'T MEAN ANYTHING UNLESS I GO MYSELF!
SO YOU DO GET IT.
C'MON, HURRY UP.
WELL, LET'S GO.


OKAY.
...


IWANAGA-SENPAI!

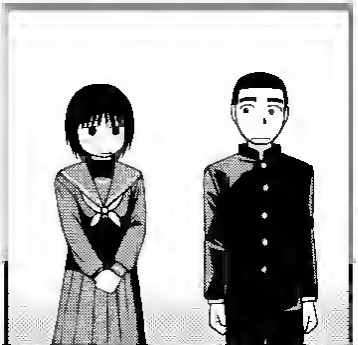
HEYO
チース
SHIMAZAKI AND SHINJŌ, YOU GUYS CAME TO SEE ME OFF, TOO?
THANKS!
OH.


IDIOT!
SHUT UP!
SHE WANTED TO ASK FOR ONE OF THE BUTTONS ON YOUR UNIFORM, SO I BROUGHT HER OVER

I...
I SEE...

I ACTUALLY JUST GAVE AWAY MY LAST BUTTON
SEE?
ホラ
ホントだ…
YEAH

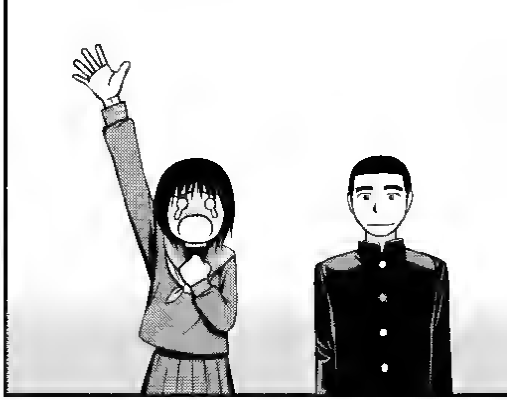
OH, SORRY..



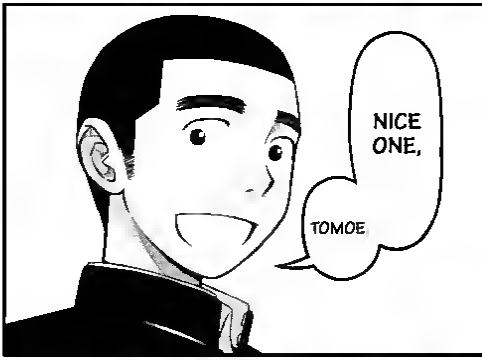
I THINK EVEN A BUTTON ON YOUR SLEEVE WOULD BE OKAY, COULD YOU GIVE ONE TO HER?
OH, A BUTTON FROM MY SLEEVE?
IS THAT OKAY, SHINJŌ?
Y-
YES!

THEN...
IT'S NOT MUCH BUT HERE YOU GO

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
...
SENPAI
TAKE CARE.
YEAH, YOU TOO, SHINJŌ.

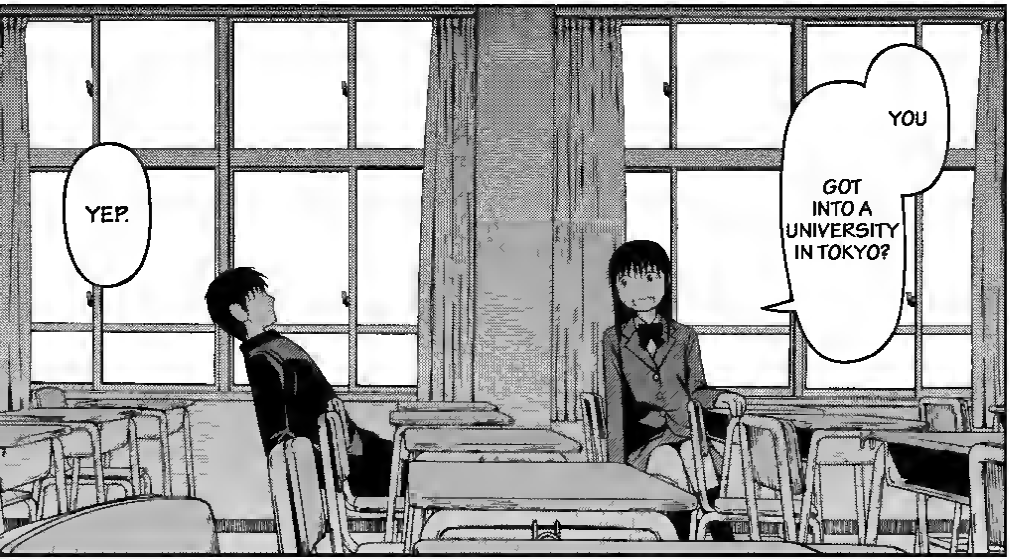


YEAH
...


NICE ONE, TOMOE

THANKS...
SHU ..

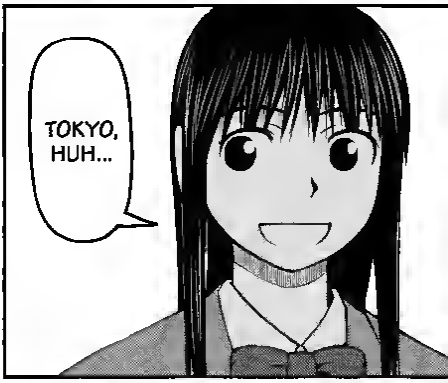
SHU...

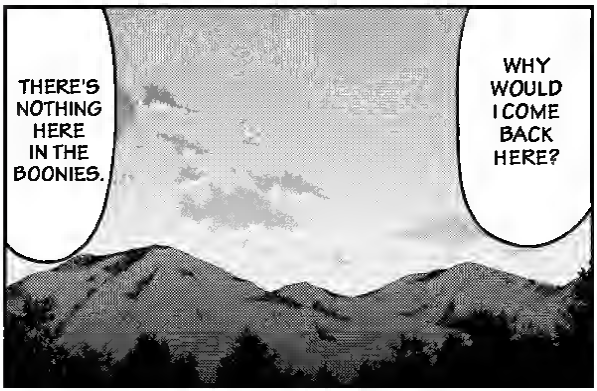

YOU GOT INTO A UNIVERSITY IN TOKYO?
YEP.

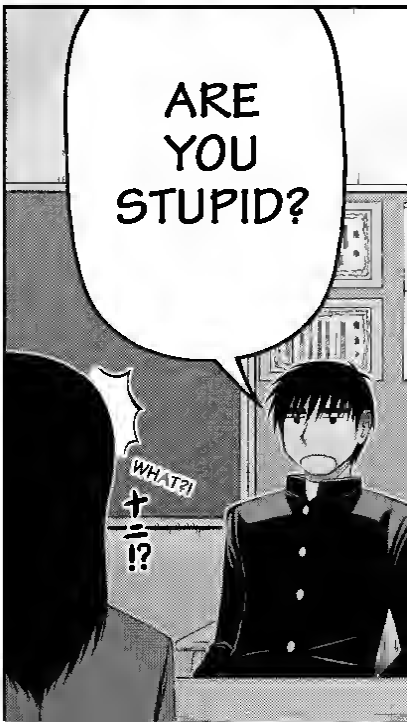
CONGRATS
THAT'S GREAT.
WELL.
IT'S NOT A GOOD SCHOOL OR ANYTHING
YOU CAN'T BE TOO PICKY. .
...

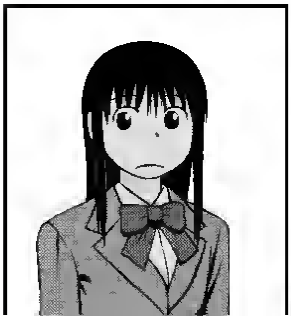
WELL,
GETTING OUT TO TOKYO IS AT THE TOP OF MY LIST, SO...
HMM...

AFTER YOU GRADU-ATE,
DO YOU PLAN ON COMING BACK HERE?


TOKYO, HUH...


WHY WOULD I COME BACK HERE?
THERE'S NOTHING HERE IN THE BOONIES.


ARE YOU STUPID?
WHAT?!
ナニ!?



I CAN'T GET STUCK HERE LIKE THAT.

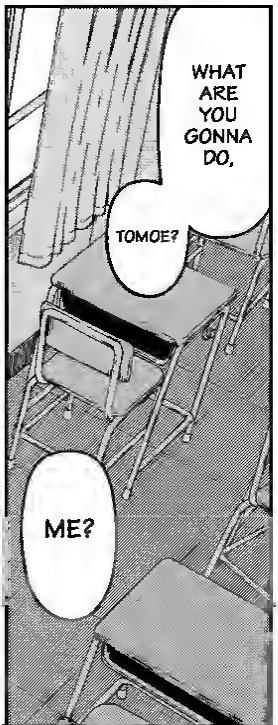
...
I CAN'T LOSE TO MY SISTER WHO WENT ALL THE WAY TO FINLAND TO MAKE HER DREAMS COME TRUE.

SHE GOT A JOB OVERSEAS. GOT MARRIED, AND HAD A BABY...

YOKO-SAN IS PRETTY AMAZING...

AND PROBABLY HELP OUT IN THE FIELDS AT HOME...
HA HA...
はは...

I...
I'M GONNA GO TO THE JUNIOR COLLEGE.
GRADUATE

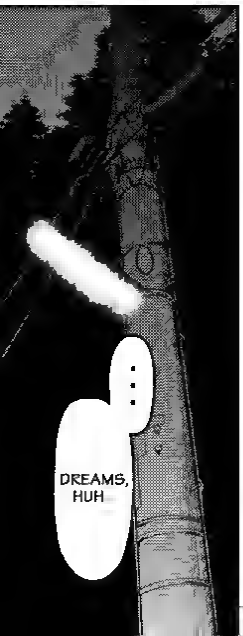

WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO,
TOMOE?
ME?

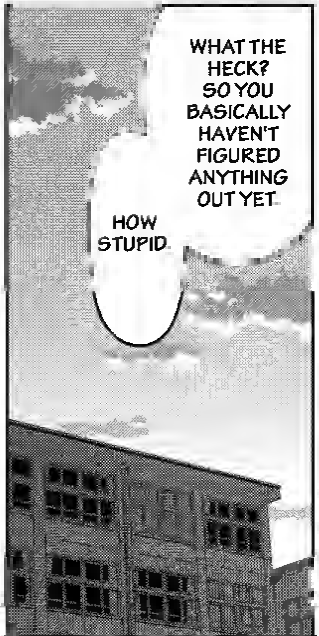
ARE YOU...

WHAT?
OUR FIELDS ARE PRETTY BIG, YOU KNOW. DON'T INSULT US.
I'M NOT.
FROWN
ARE YOU REALLY HAPPY DOING THAT?
WHAT ARE THEY?
WELL, DO YOU?
YES!
DON'T YOU...
HAVE ANY DREAMS?
...

WHEN I'M IN MY 20S, I'M GOING TO START MY OWN BUSINESS.

...
WHA?
I'M GOING TO START A COMPANY IN TOKYO
IT MIGHT BE SMALL AT FIRST, BUT...
...


...
DREAMS, HUH.

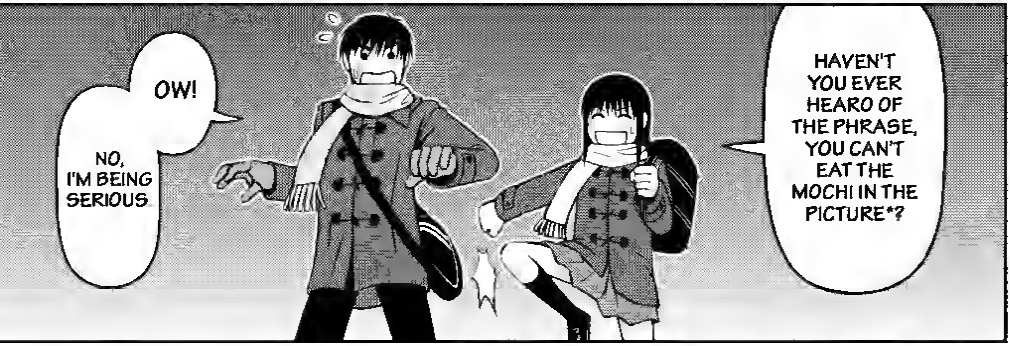

WHAT THE HECK? SO YOU BASICALLY HAVEN'T FIGURED ANYTHING OUT YET.
HOW STUPID.

WHAT KIND OF COMPANY?

I HAVEN'T DECIDED YET.

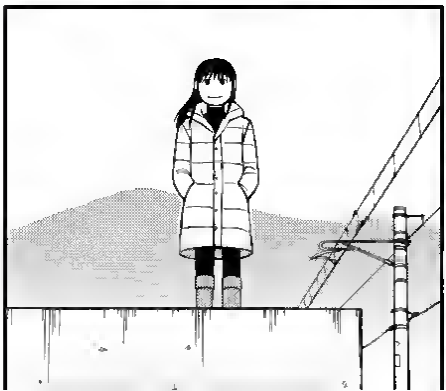
ALL RIGHT.
?
I THINK IT'S GONNA TAKE A BIT LONGER
FOR ME TO FIND MY DREAMS...
IF YOU FIND SOMETHING YOU WANT TO DO IN TOKYO,
THEN YOU CAN RELY ON ME.
HUH?
I'LL HELP YOU CHASE YOUR DREAMS.
I'LL EVEN HELP FUND THEM.
WHA...
...

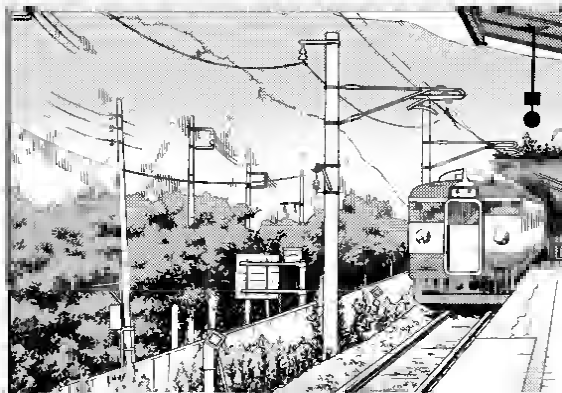
* A JAPANESE PROVERB MEANING THAT NO AMOUNT OF THINKING WILL MAKE A DREAM INTO REALITY



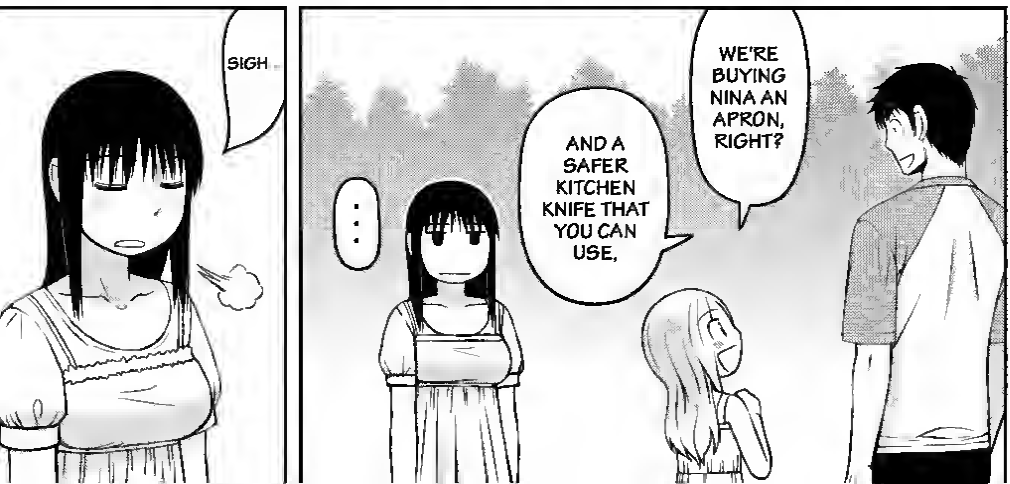
* A COMEDIAN AND ACTOR WHO IS FAMOUS FOR SAYING THAT PHRASE

SIGN: JR EAST



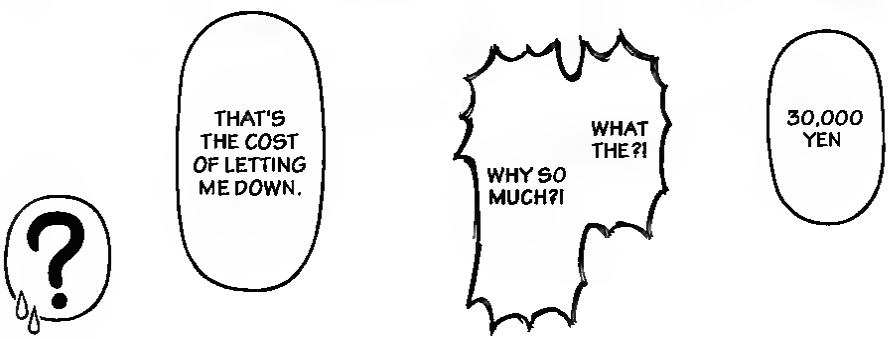


SORRY, TOMOE.
COULD YOU GIVE US A RIDE TO THE HOME CENTER AGAIN?


SIGH
...
AND A SAFER KITCHEN KNIFE THAT YOU CAN USE,
WE'RE BUYING NINA AN APRON, RIGHT?

LIFE REALLY DOESN'T GO AS PLANNED, DOES IT?
HUH? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
JUST TALKING TO MYSELF.

I DON'T MIND GIVING YOU A RIDE, BUT...
THE LEAST YOU COULD DO IS CHIP IN FOR GAS SOMETIMES.
OKAY, OKAY.
HOW MUCH?


30,000 YEN
WHAT THE?!
WHY SO MUCH?!
THAT'S THE COST OF LETTING ME DOWN.
?

CHAPTER 16

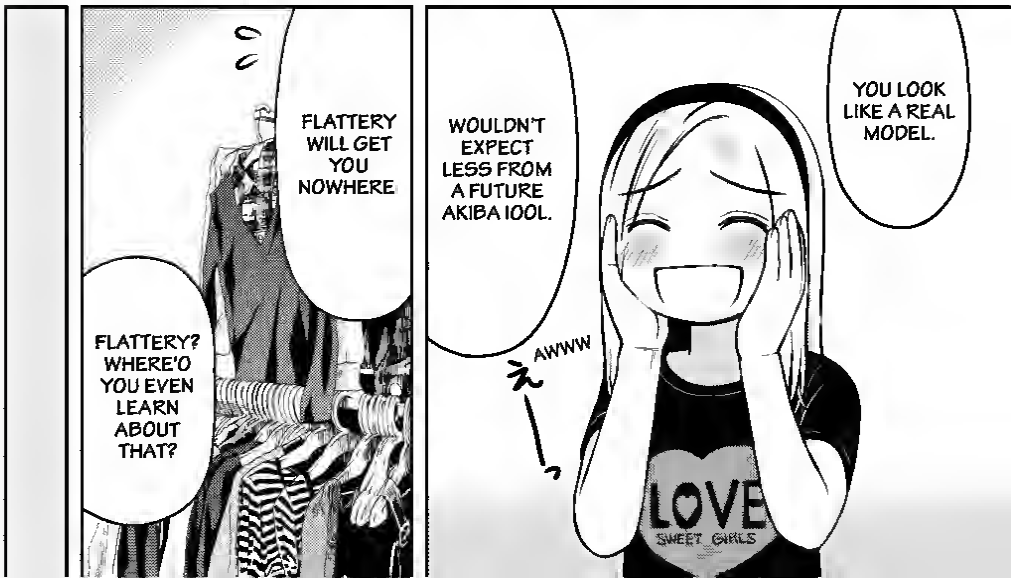
FATHER'S SIDE, MOTHER'S SIDE

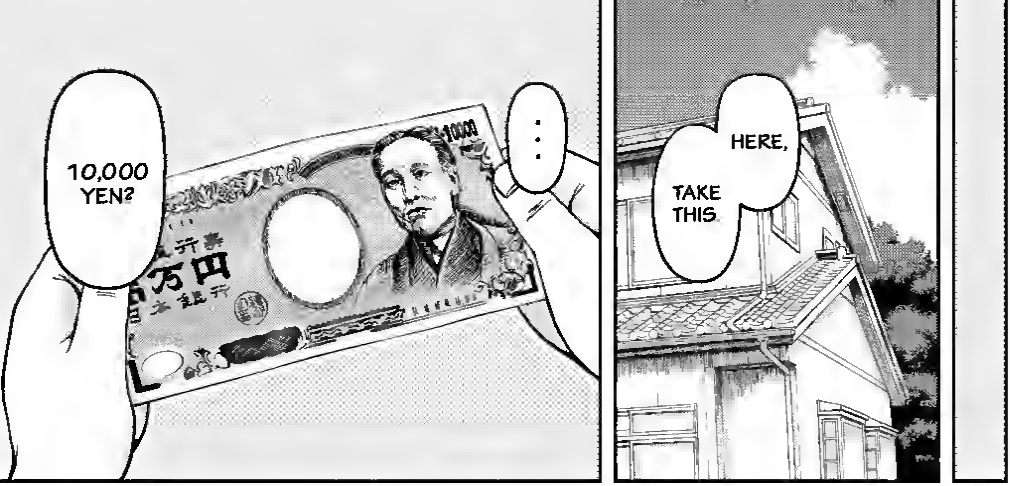
SILVER NINA

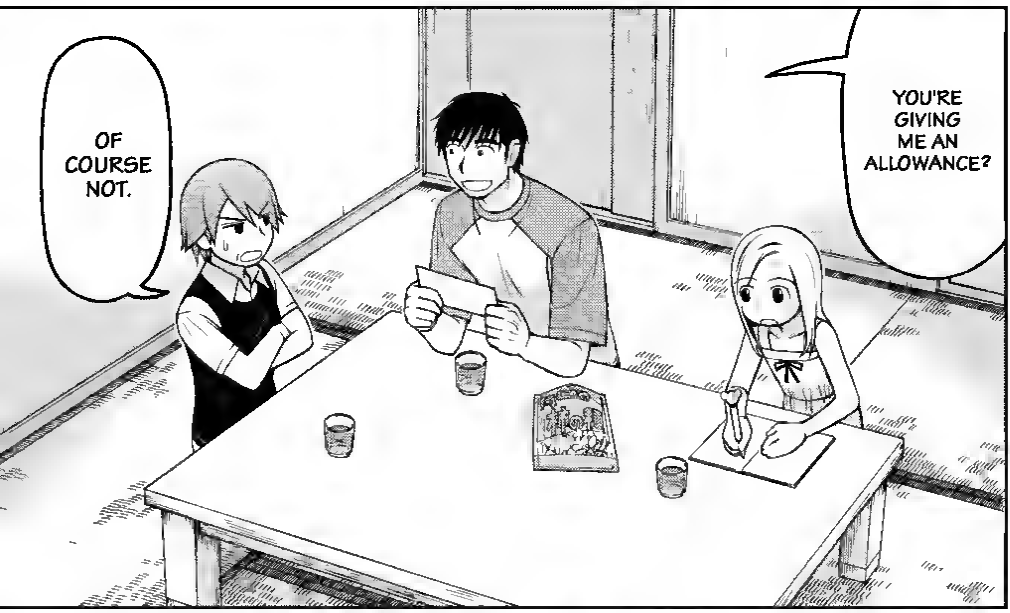
LOVE
SWEET GIRLS

WOW.
...

SALE
SALE
THAT'S PRETTY AMAZING
HM.. WELL...
HOW'S THIS, SHUTARO?

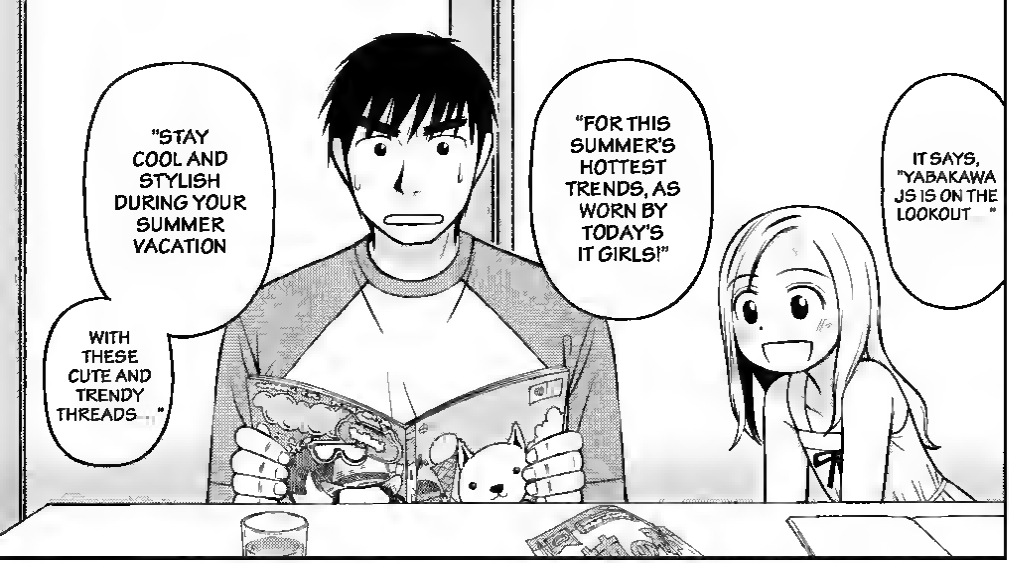

FLATTERY WILL GET YOU NOWHERE
FLATTERY? WHERE'D YOU EVEN LEARN ABOUT THAT?
WOULDN'T EXPECT LESS FROM A FUTURE AKIBA IOOL.
YOU LOOK LIKE A REAL MODEL.
AWWW
LOVE
SWEET GIRLS


10,000 YEN?
...
HERE, TAKE THIS.

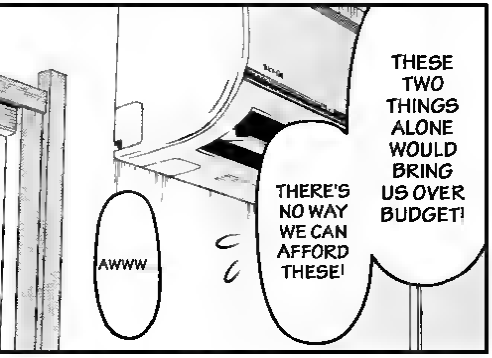

OF COURSE NOT.
YOU'RE GIVING ME AN ALLOWANCE?

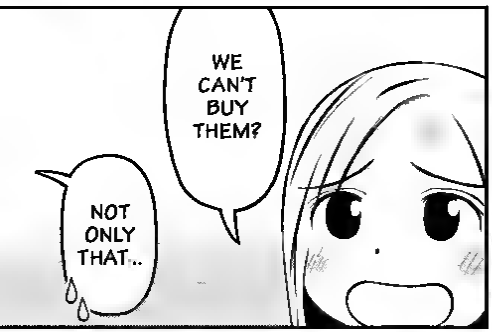
UM...
YOU DON'T HAVE ANY CLOTHES?
FOR NINA?
COULD YOU GO BUY SOME CLOTHES FOR NINA-CHAN?

HM?
LOOK AT THIS!
SHE DOES, BUT...
I SEE.
NINA WANTS TO DRESS THE SAME WAY AS ALL THE JAPANESE GIRLS, TOO
PURPLE WITH PINK POLKA DOTS, EH
紫の生地にピンクの水玉か…
CLOTHES FROM FINLAND ARE A BIT TOO FLASHY.
LIKE THIS!
みろ LOOK!
YEAH, THAT IS A BIT MUCH...
LET'S SEE...


"STAY COOL AND STYLISH DURING YOUR SUMMER VACATION
WITH THESE CUTE AND TRENDY THREADS..."
"FOR THIS SUMMER'S HOTTEST TRENDS, AS WORN BY TODAY'S IT GIRLS!"
IT SAYS, "YABAKAWA JS IS ON THE LOOKOUT..."

SIGNS CLOTHING PRICE LIST





YOU'LL PROBABLY BE ABLE TO FIND SIMILAR CLOTHES THAT DON'T COST AS MUCH THERE.
I SEE
HUH?
ACTUALLY, WHILE YOU WERE IN TOKYO.
THEY BUILT A BIG CLOTHING STORE IN CENTRAL KARUIZAWA

SIGN: FASHION CENTER SHIMASHIMAYA

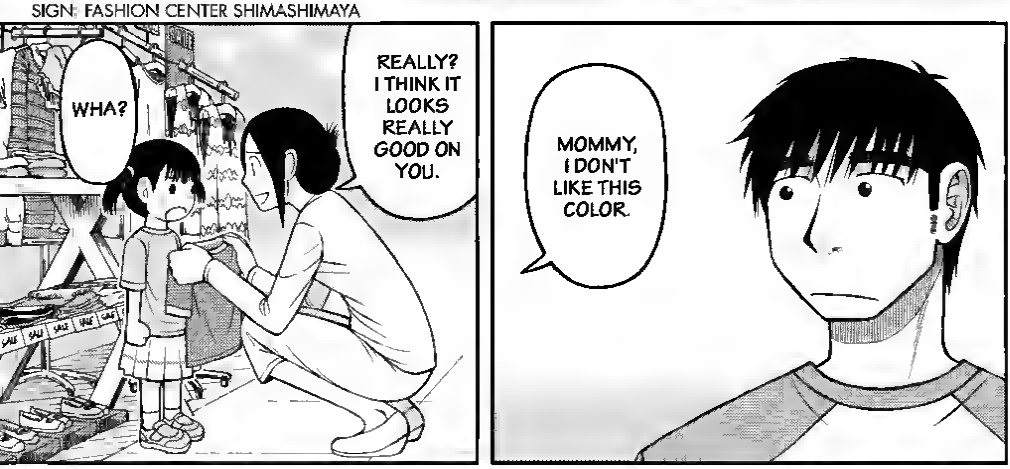
ONCE YOU START SCHOOL,
YOU'RE GOING TO BE SUPER POPULAR, NINA
YOU THINK SO?
REALLY?
YEAH, DEFINITELY IMPRESSIVE
YEAH, TOTALLY.
マジヤバだぜ
TOTES AWESOME
AW, SHUTARO
YOU FLATTER ME TOO MUCH
WAIT, WAIT, WAIT.
AREN'T YOU TWO FORGETTING SOMEONE?
ACKNOWLEDGE MY STYLING SKILLS AT LEAST A BIT
...
YEAH
I GUESS YOU MIGHT HAVE SOME FASHION SENSE, TOMOE
"MIGHT"?! SERIOUSLY?!

WELL, HONESTLY...
ALL THE CLOTHES YOU CHOOSE ARE SUPER CUTE, TOMOE.
THANKS, NINA-CHAN
I'M GRATEFUL FOR THAT, TOO.
I'M THE ONE WHO DROVE YOU TWO HERE.
I DIDN'T ACTUALLY COME ALONG...
I DON'T KNOW A THING ABOUT LITTLE GIRLS' CLOTHES, SO I'M GRATEFUL YOU CAME ALONG TO RESCUE ME, TOMOE.
SALE SALE SALE SALE SALE SALE SALE SALE
SALE SALE SALE SALE SALE SALE
BUT, WE'RE NOT HER PARENTS OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT.
THAT WAS JUST AN EXAMPLE!
THE DAD ISN'T NEEDED AT TIMES LIKE THIS.
SO THAT'S HOW IT WORKS...
WELL..
USUALLY THE MOM HELPS PICK OUT CLOTHES FOR THE GIRL.

SALE
SALE
SURE.
I WANNA SIT DOWN FOR A BIT, SO WOULD YOU MIND TAKING OVER?
ALL RIGHT. NINA-CHAN, WHY DON'T WE GO LOOK OVER THERE?
OKAY.
勘定場→
THANKS, TOMOE.
LEAVE THE REST TO ME.
DESPITE WHAT I'VE SAID, I'M ACTUALLY HAVING FUN.
REALLY?
I MEAN, NINA-CHAN WEARS EVERYTHING WELL.
I TOTALLY DON'T MIND HELPING HER FIND HER LOOK.
...
I SEE.

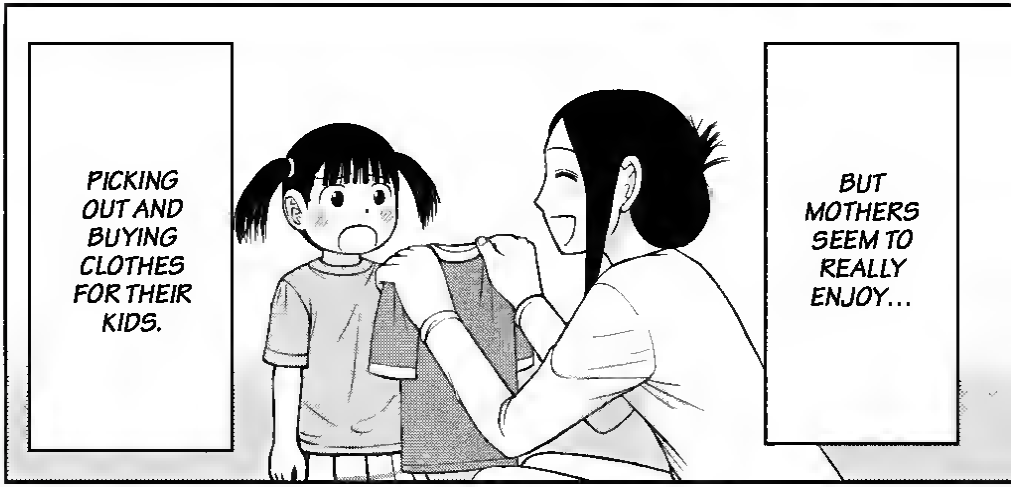
ALL RIGHT, I'LL LEAVE IT TO YOU, THEN
GOT IT.
BUT...

SIGN: FASHION CENTER SHIMASHIMAYA



JUST A LITTLE LONGER.
ARE WE DONE YET?
SO IT'S PROBABLY BETTER THAT IT'S A BIT BIG.
BUT YOU'LL GROW INTO IT..
THIS ONE MIGHT BE TOO BIG FOR YOU..

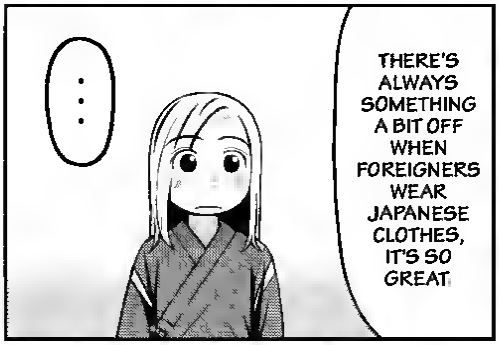
I DIDN'T NOTICE IT WHEN I WAS A KID...

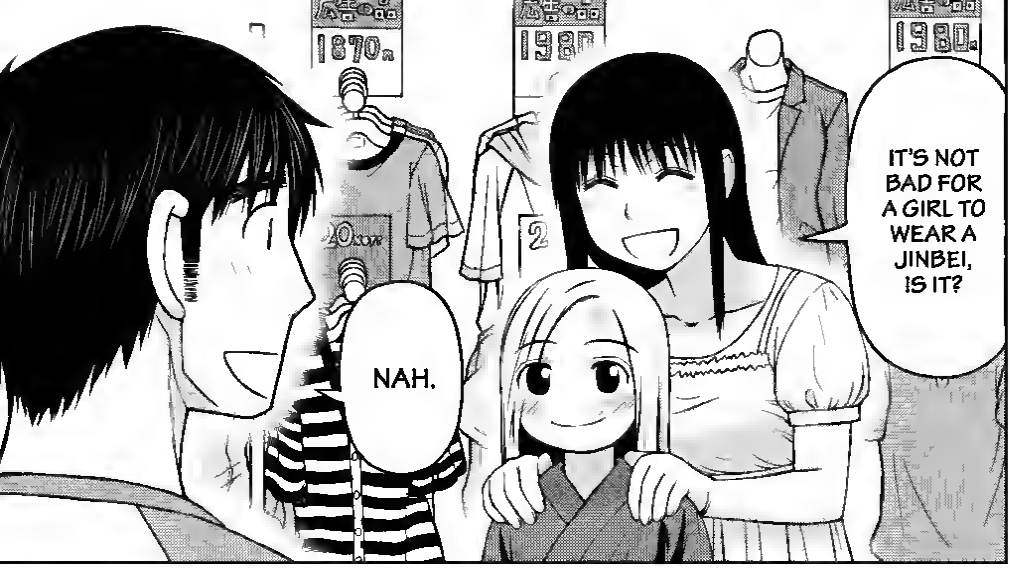

PICKING OUT AND BUYING CLOTHES FOR THEIR KIDS.
BUT MOTHERS SEEM TO REALLY ENJOY...

THAT'S SORT OF A SHAME...
NEE-CHAN DOESN'T HAVE THIS KIND OF HAPPINESS RIGHT NOW..
THAT MEANS
I'M ACTUALLY HAVING FUN.

IF YOU KEEP FOCUSING TOO MUCH ON WORK...
NEE-CHAN...
NINA'S GONNA GROW UP BEFORE YOU KNOW IT...
COOL BIZ
SHUTARO!

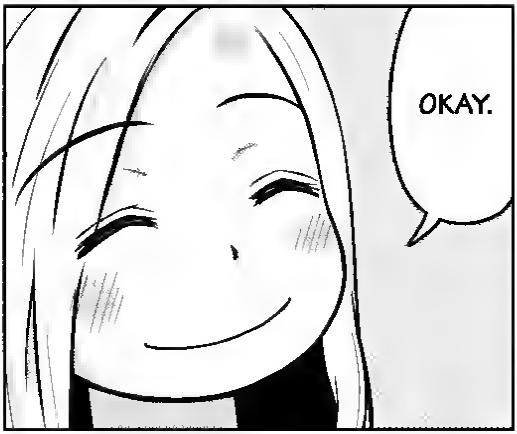
* A LIGHT, TRADITIONAL JAPANESE TOP AND SHORTS, USUALLY WORN IN THE SUMMER.





SIGN: CASHIER CORNER

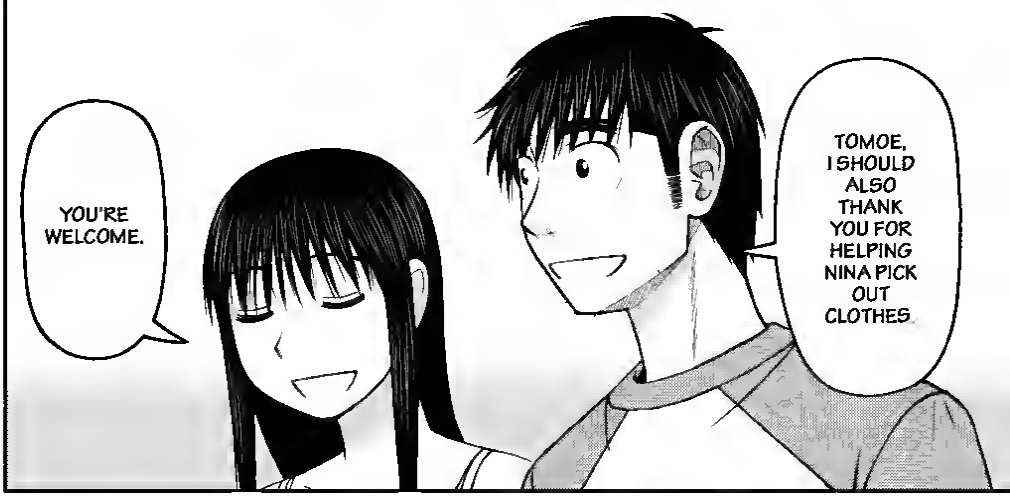
MOMMY?
LET'S SKYPE WITH NEE-CHAN TONIGHT SO YOU CAN SHOW HER YOUR NEW JINBEI.
BY THE WAY, NINA...


OKAY.

I'M SURE NEE-CHAN WILL BE REALLY HAPPY.

SO WE DID GO OVER BUDGET AFTER ALL...
THAT'LL BE 24,600 YEN, PLEASE

SHUTARO
HM?
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
SALE
THANKS FOR BUYING CLOTHES FOR NINA.
SURE.
SIGN: FASHION CENTER SHIMASHIMAYA
MAKE SURE YOU THANK GRANDMA WHEN WE GET HOME.
OKAY.


TOMOE, I SHOULD ALSO THANK YOU FOR HELPING NINA PICK OUT CLOTHES.
YOU'RE WELCOME.

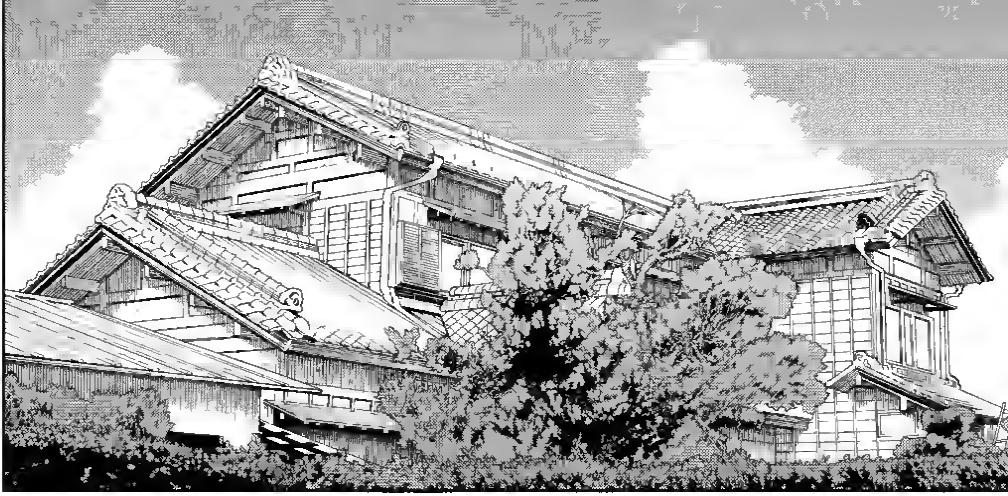
SINCE WE CAME ALL THE WAY OUT HERE,
WHY DON'T WE GRAB SOMETHING TO EAT WHILE WE'RE AT IT?
IT'LL BE MY TREAT.
I'M IN!

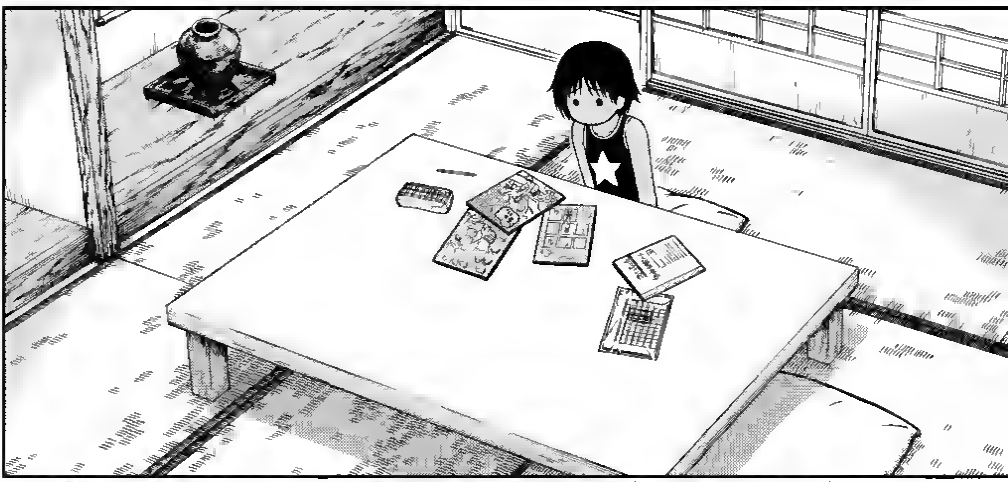
THEN, LET'S GO EAT A FULL COURSE MEAL AT A PRICEY FRENCH RESTAURANT,
NINA-CHAN

IT'O BE BETTER IF WE DIDN'T...

CHAPTER 17

LET'S STUDY

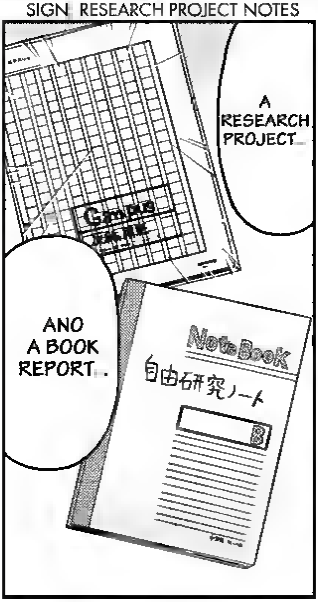


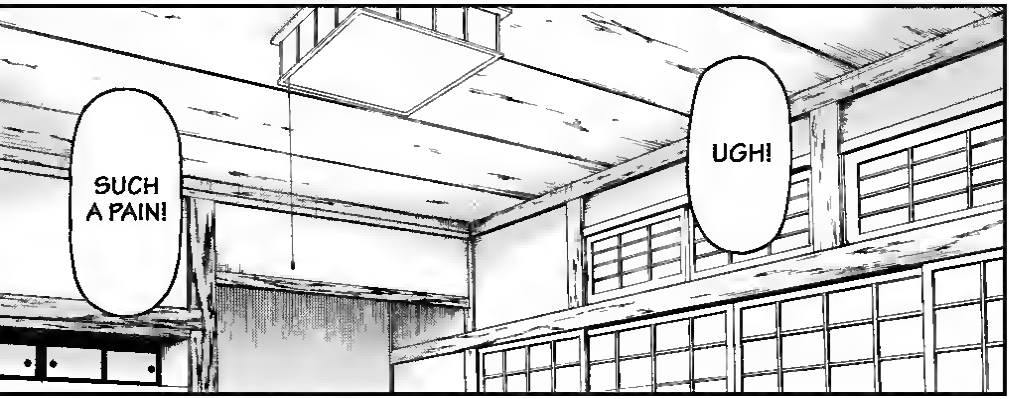


SIGN: RESEARCH PROJECT NOTES

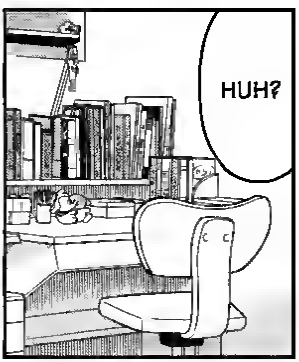
SIGN: DRILLS FOR SUMMER VACATION

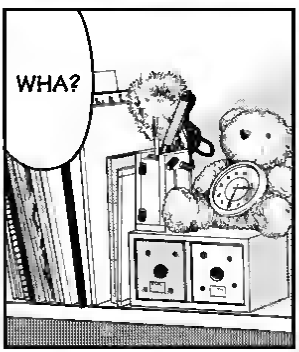
SIGN: PRACTICING MATH




UGH!
SUCH A PAIN!

MOM...
HAVE YOU SEEN MY GAMES?


HUH?

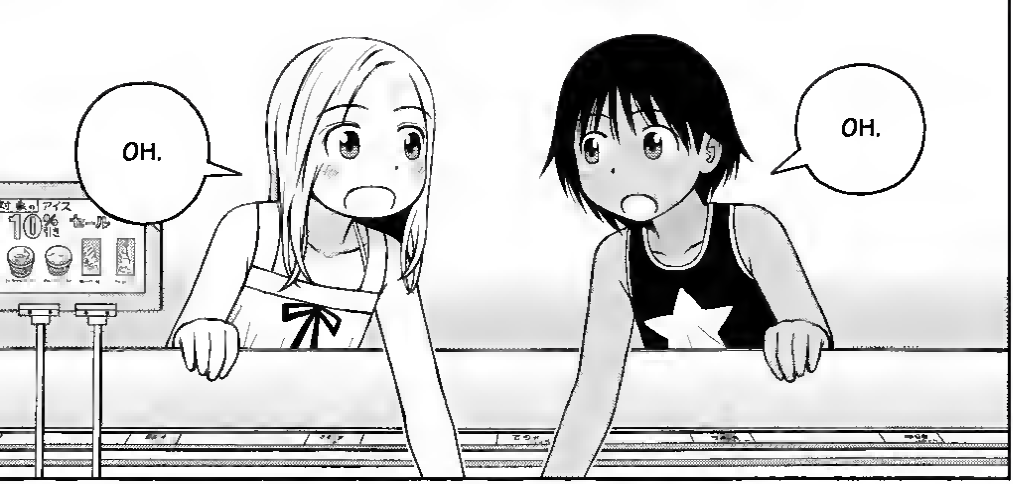

WHA?

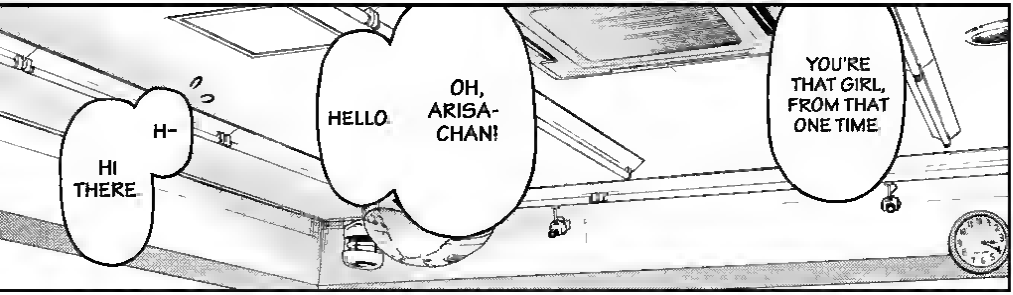
I'M GONNA GO PLAY SOME GAMES

I'VE HIDDEN YOUR GAMES.
YOU'RE GONNA BE IN TROUBLE AT THE END OF THE MONTH IF YOU DON'T GET ON IT SOON.
IT'S ALREADY THE MIDDLE OF AUGUST.
YOU HAVEN'T REALLY DONE MUCH OF YOUR SUMMER HOMEWORK, HAVE YOU?
ANYWAY, NO GAMES UNTIL YOU FINISH YOUR SUMMER HOMEWORK.
AWWWW!
I'M NOT GOING TO WRITE YOUR BOOK REPORT FOR YOU AGAIN LIKE I DID LAST YEAR.
I... I KNOW.

I WANT A POPSICLE.
...
SO ANNOYING
めんどくさ～
ARISA.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
I'M JUST GONNA GO GET A POPSICLE FROM THE CONVENIENCE STORE.
MAKE SURE YOU CONTINUE YOUR HOMEWORK WHEN YOU GET BACK.
I-I'M GOING NOW!

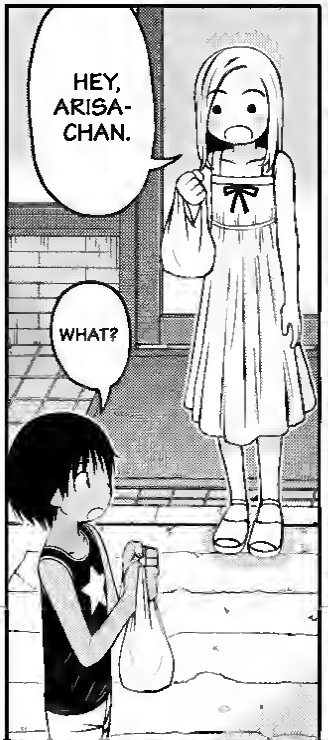
WHY DO I HAVE TO HAVE HOMEWORK DURING MY SUMMER VACATION?
MAN...
MOM'S BEING SO ANNOYING
JEEZ...
SAVE OK
I GUESS I'LL JUST GET A GARI-GARI POPSICLE


OH.
OH.

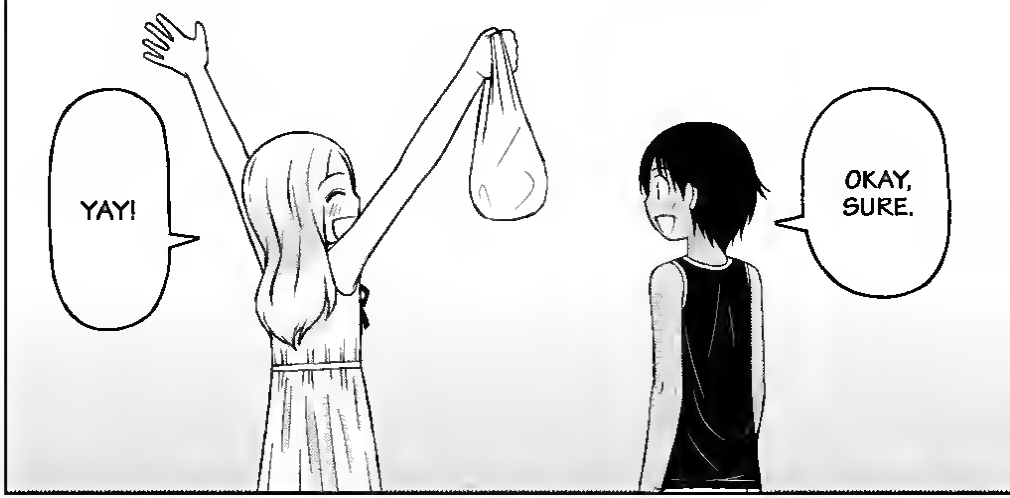

H-
HI THERE.
HELLO
OH, ARISA-CHAN!
YOU'RE THAT GIRL, FROM THAT ONE TIME.

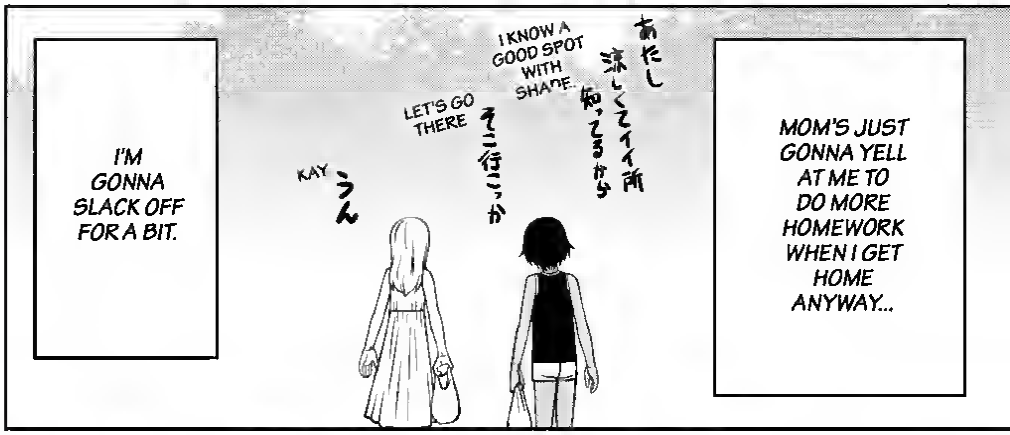
LET'S EAT OUR POPSICLES TOGETHER.

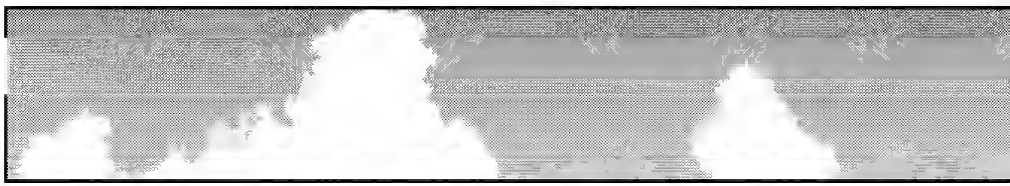
...

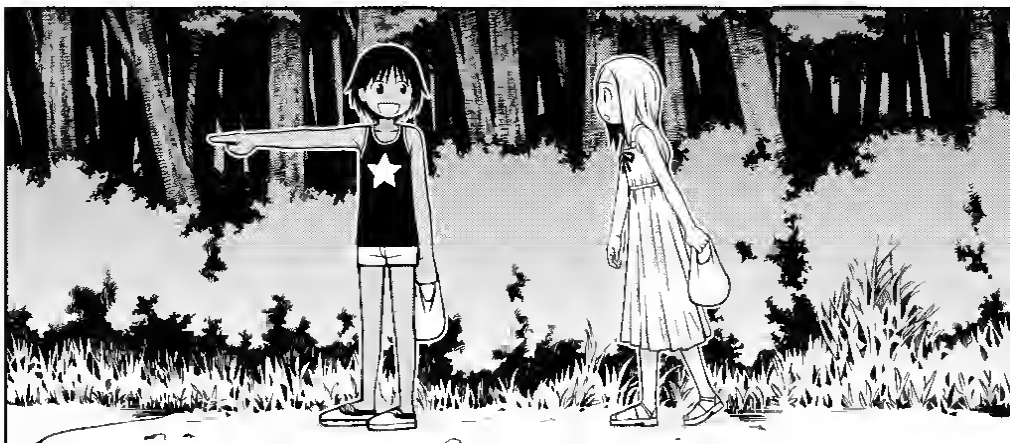

HEY, ARISA-CHAN.
WHAT?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
SAVE OK

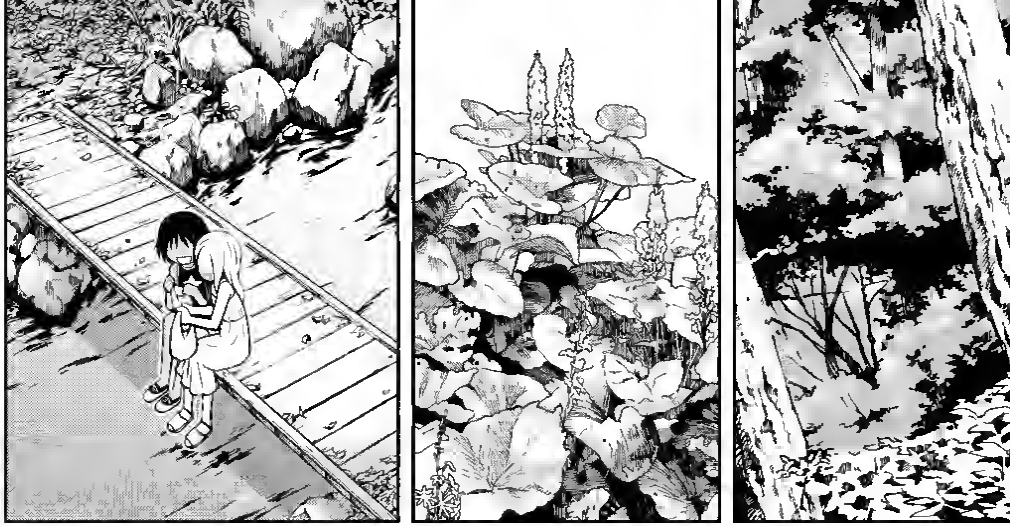

YAY!
OKAY, SURE.

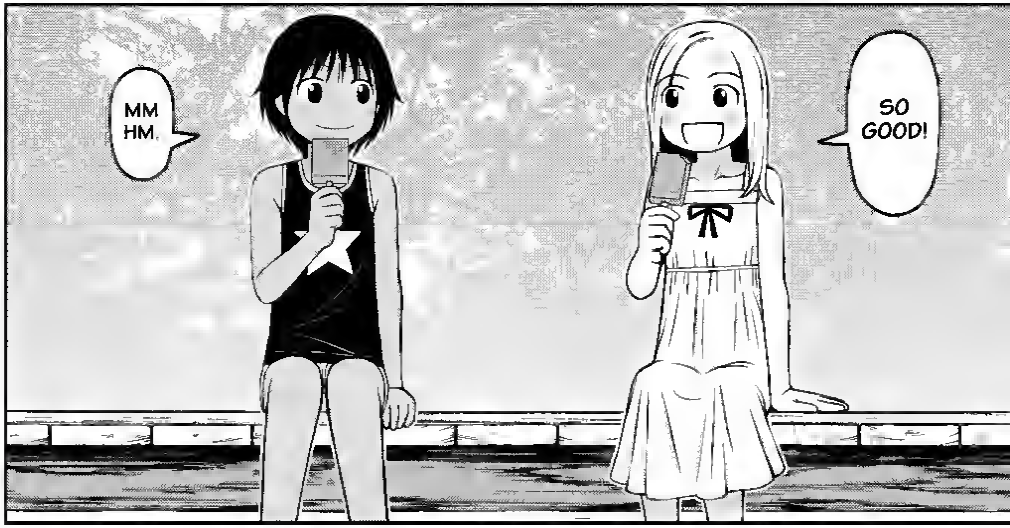

I'M GONNA SLACK OFF FOR A BIT.
あたし涼しくてイイ所知ってるから
I KNOW A GOOD SPOT WITH SHADE.
そこ行こっか
LET'S GO THERE
うん
KAY
MOM'S JUST GONNA YELL AT ME TO DO MORE HOMEWORK WHEN I GET HOME ANYWAY...

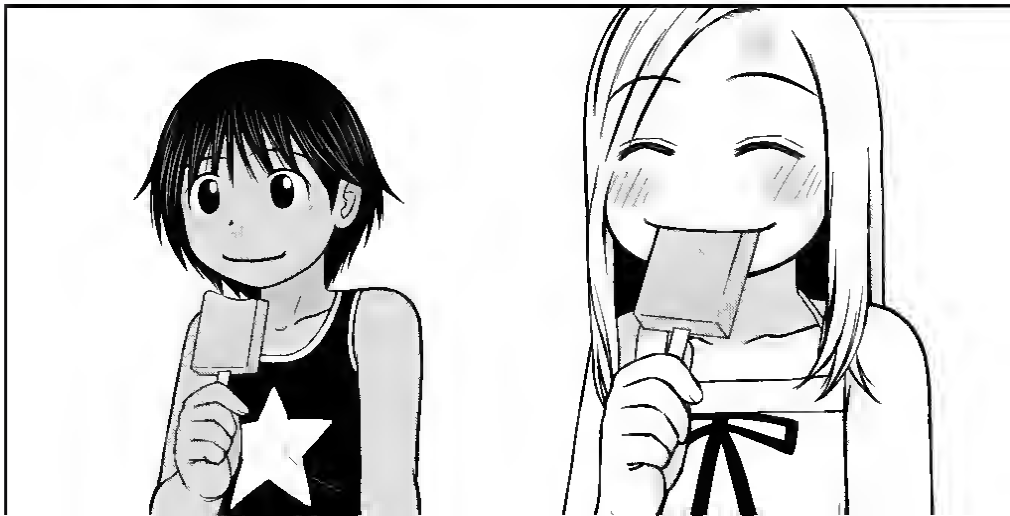




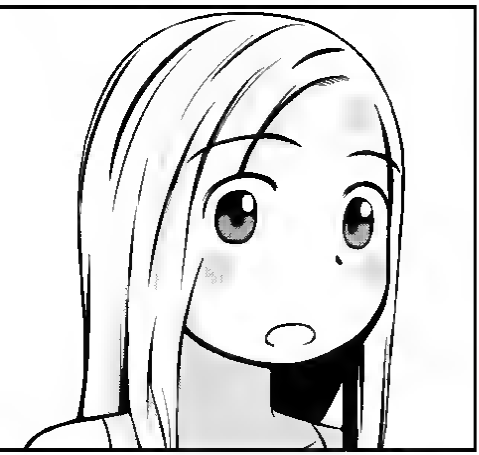
FWOOOOOSH
ああああ
A WATER-FALL!




MM HM.
SO GOOD!



FSSSSSHHH
HAPPP

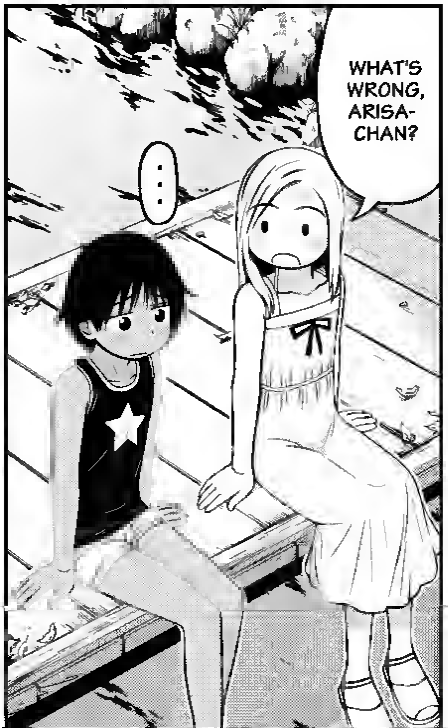


SIGH...

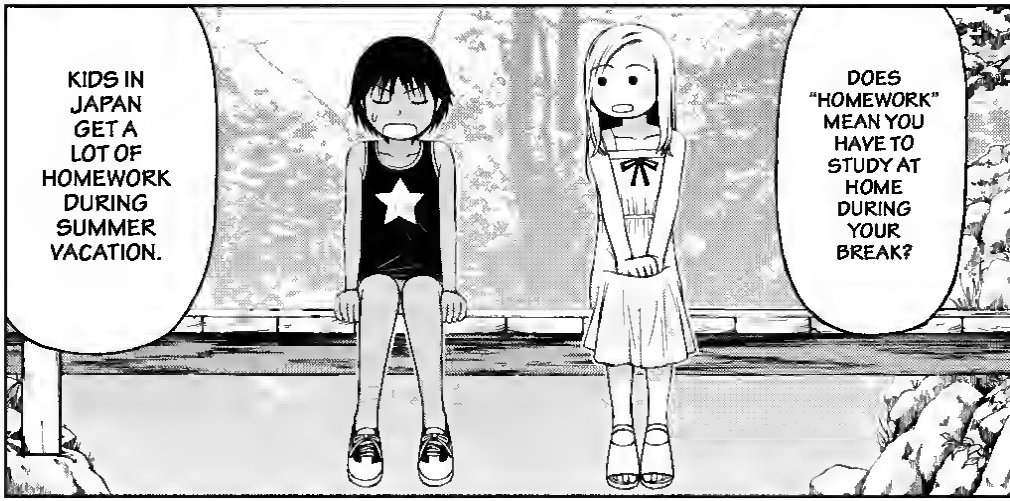
I'M NOT SICK OR ANY-THING...
I'M JUST FEELING DOWN
OH.

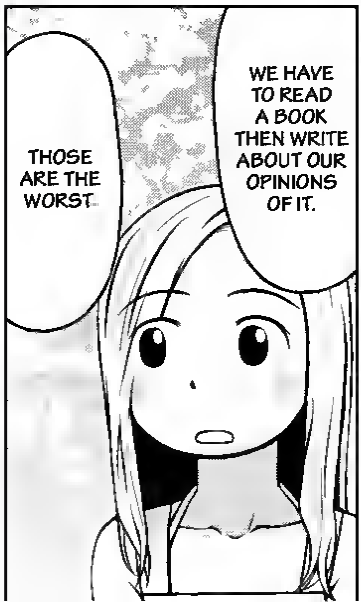
I'M JUST SAD.

ARE YOU SICK?
?


WHAT'S WRONG, ARISA-CHAN?
...

HOME-WORK?
GUESS THAT MEANS YOU DON'T HAVE ANY SUMMER HOMEWORK
NOPE
YOU HAVEN'T STARTED COMING TO SCHOOL YET, RIGHT?


KIDS IN JAPAN GET A LOT OF HOMEWORK DURING SUMMER VACATION.
DOES "HOMEWORK" MEAN YOU HAVE TO STUDY AT HOME DURING YOUR BREAK?


THOSE ARE THE WORST.
WE HAVE TO READ A BOOK THEN WRITE ABOUT OUR OPINIONS OF IT.

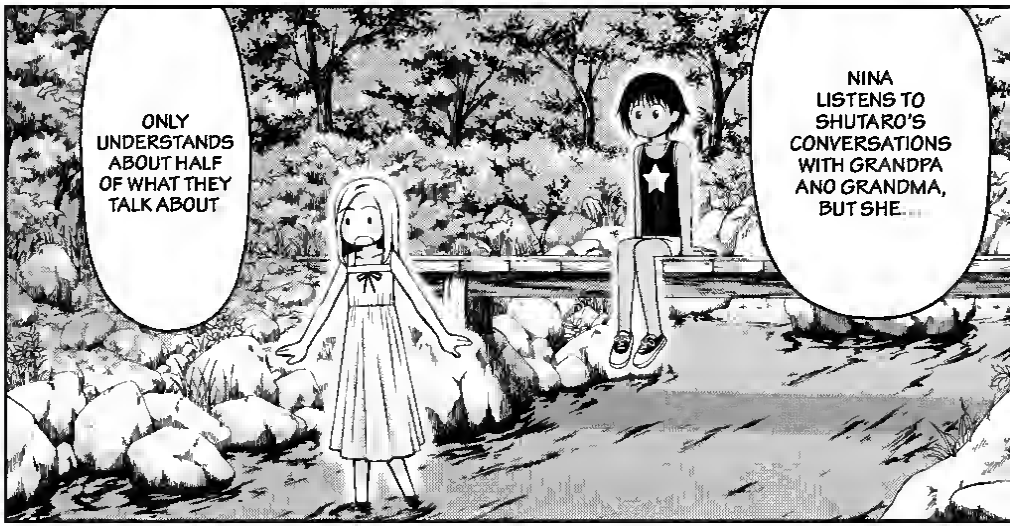
A BOOK REPORT?
DRILLS FOR SUMMER VACATION, A RESEARCH PROJECT, A BOOK REPORT.

SO WE HAVE TO STAY HOME AND STUDY, EVEN THOUGH IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE SUMMER VACATION
HUH

A BOOK REPORT.
THAT SOUNDS FUN.
WHA?
NAH, IT'S REALLY NOT FUN
YOU KNOW THAT YOU CAN'T READ MANGA OR ANYTHING FOR THOSE, RIGHT?
YOU'RE SO MUCH BETTER OFF,
SINCE YOU'RE ABLE TO PLAY FOR YOUR ENTIRE VACATION.
...
NINA STUDIES AT HOME EVERY DAY.
HUH?
FSSSHHH
HAPPP

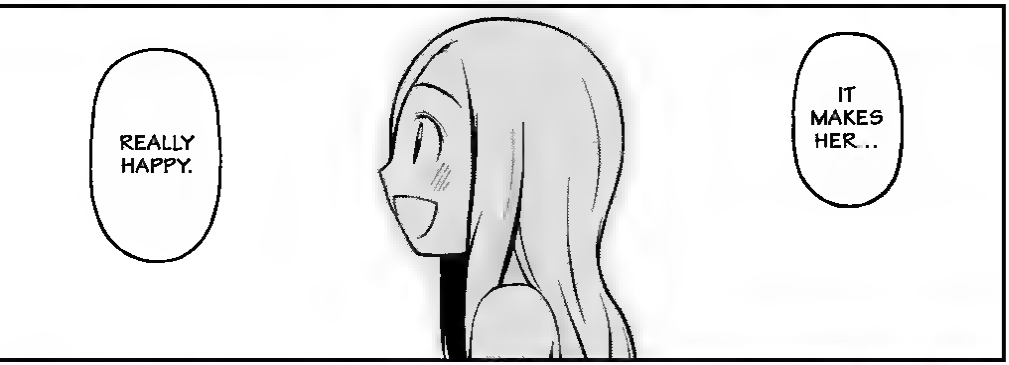
SPLOOSH

BECAUSE
NINA WANTS TO BECOME FLUENT IN JAPANESE AS FAST AS SHE CAN
...

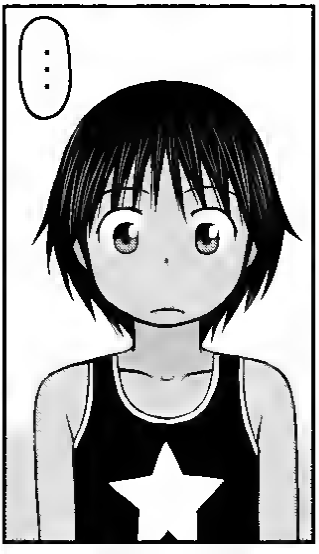

ONLY UNDERSTANDS ABOUT HALF OF WHAT THEY TALK ABOUT
NINA LISTENS TO SHUTARO'S CONVERSATIONS WITH GRANDPA AND GRANDMA, BUT SHE...

BUT...
SO IT GETS A LITTLE LONELY.
IT'S THE SAME WHEN MOMMY AND SHUTARO TALK, TOO THERE'S A LOT NINA DOESN'T GET

WHEN A WORD THAT NINA HAS WORKED REALLY HARD TO LEARN..
COMES UP ON TV...
OR WHEN SHE'S TALKING TO SHUTARO, AND SHE ACTUALLY UNDERSTANDS THINGS...


IT MAKES HER...
REALLY HAPPY.

NINA THINKS STUDYING IS A LOT OF FUN.
BECAUSE...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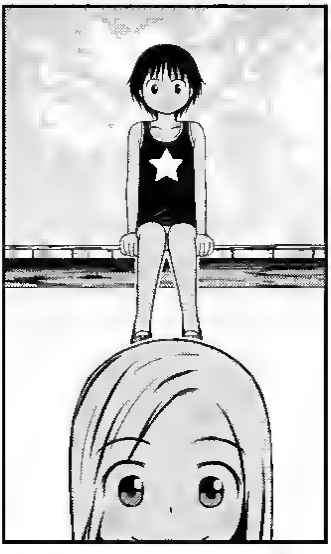
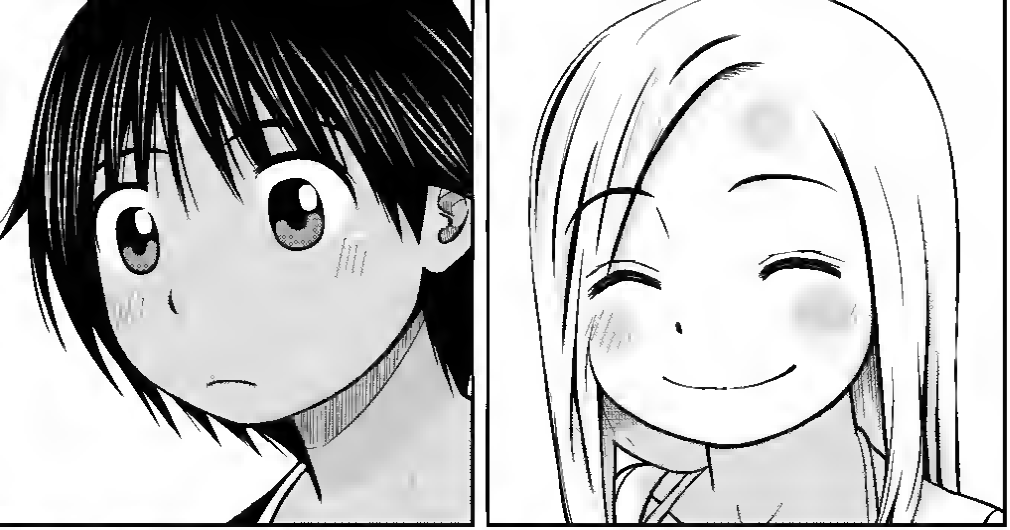


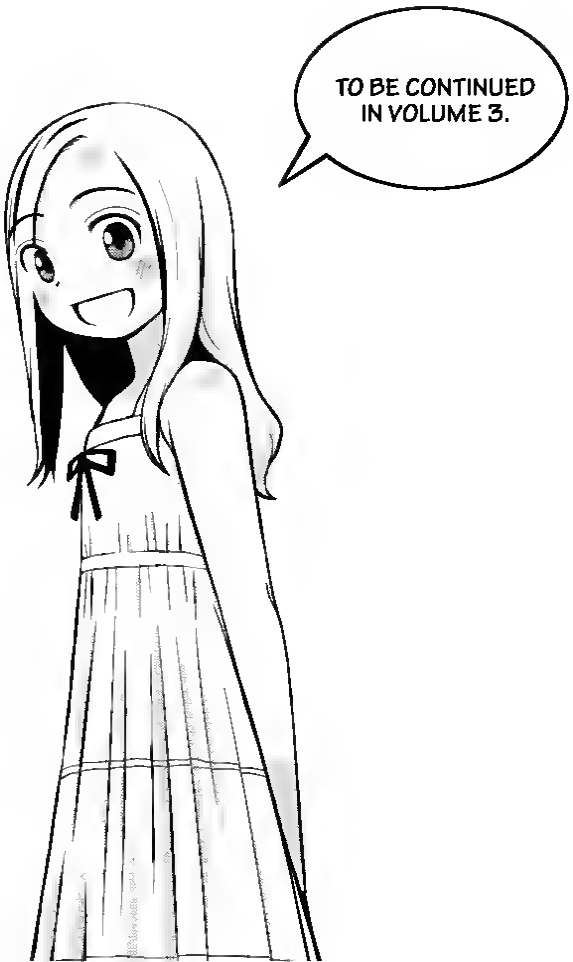
NINA WANTS TO LEARN MORE AND MORE JAPANESE...
SO SHE CAN TALK TO EVERYONE MORE AND MORE.



NAH, NOT THAT.
YOU'RE WEIRD.

WHAT?
IT'S ODD THAT YOU THINK OF STUDYING AS FUN.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?
WHAT'S THE MATTER? YOU DIDN'T WANT TO DO YOUR HOMEWORK AT ALL EARLIER.
I SEE.
SOMETHING GOOD MIGHT HAPPEN TO ME, TOO.
I'VE BEEN THINKING, AND MAYBE IF I STUDY...
THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT
I'LL RETURN YOUR GAMES AS SOON AS YOU FINISH YOUR HOMEWORK.
WELL, I'VE GOT SOMETHING GOOD FOR YOU.


TO BE CONTINUED
IN VOLUME 3.